

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING OFFICER NICHOLAS K. SLOAN: A MAN OF COURAGE

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Nicholas K. Sloan for exhibiting tremendous courage while serving with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. During his tenure with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, Officer Sloan's energy, commitment and dedication to his job made him an extraordinary benefit to the entire St. Louis community.

Officer Sloan knew at an early age that he wanted to become a police officer, just like his father. After graduating from the Police Academy, he honorably requested to be placed with the Eighth District so that he could make a difference in the inner city. Officer Sloan later earned a spot on the Eighth District Weed & Seed Unit which is a Department of Justice Initiative that assigns officers to help designated neighborhoods work on some of their worst problems, mainly centered on narcotics and firearm violations.

Quickly becoming "streetwise" and impressing his supervisors, he knew first hand who the "players" were in the community. He was instrumental in helping the unit compile a substantial amount of arrests and seizures. During his time, the unit was credited with 396 total arrests, recovering 123 firearms, seizing 31 vehicles and collecting \$35,901 under Asset Forfeiture guidelines.

Mr. Speaker, Officer Sloan was just 24 years old when he was killed in the line of duty while proudly and heroically serving the St. Louis community. His immense contribution to reducing crime in St. Louis, his bravery and his kindness will never be forgotten. It is with great privilege that I recognize Officer Nicholas K. Sloan today before Congress.

HONORING JOSEPH BOMMARITO

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Joseph Bommarito upon his retirement after 32 years of service to our community.

Since his family moved to Redford when he was just 10 years old, Joe has been a staple in our community. Before accepting the appointment as Deputy Supervisor in January of 1997, Joe served the Redford Township Police Department for 25 years in the capacities of patrolman, sergeant, lieutenant and inspector. Joe's impact was immediately felt as he successfully negotiated cost saving contracts and gave the Townhall a new look.

His wife, Carol, and his sons, Joseph, Tony, Michael and Bryan, should be extremely proud

of the undeniable mark he has left on the community. We at home will sorely miss and always benefit from his dedication and leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my sincere appreciation to Mr. Joseph Bommarito, upon his retirement as Deputy Supervisor of Redford Township, for his fine service to our community and our country.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING CHARLES DAVIS PALMER

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, whereas, Brett and Emily Palmer are celebrating the arrival of their son, Charles Davis Palmer; and

Whereas, Charles Davis Palmer was born on the twenty-fourth Day of March, 2004 and weighed eight pounds and fifteen ounces; and

Whereas, Mr. And Mrs. Palmer are proud to welcome their new son into their home; and

Whereas, Charles Davis Palmer will be a blessed addition to his family, bringing love, joy and happiness for many years to come;

Therefore, I join with Members of Congress and Congressional Staff in celebrating with Brett and Emily Palmer and wishing Charles Davis Palmer a very Happy Birthday.

HONORING OFFICER GABRIEL KEITHLEY: DEDICATED TO SERVICE

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Officer Gabriel Keithley for being extremely courageous and dedicated while serving with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. Officer Keithley's strong work ethic and commitment to his job make him an extraordinary benefit to the entire St. Louis community.

Officer Keithley fulfilled his life's ambition when he was hired by the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department in 2001. After graduating from the Police Academy, Officer Keithley was placed with the Eighth District where he gained the reputation of being a hard working and devoted officer. His endeavors have not gone unnoticed by his colleagues; in January of 2003 they voted Gabriel Keithley Officer of the Month. His supervisors later recommended him to the Eighth District Weed & Seed Unit. This is a Department of Justice Initiative that assigns officers to help designated neighborhoods work on some of their worst problems, mainly centered on narcotics and firearm violations.

Officer Keithley has been an immense asset to the Weed & Seed Unit. He has been instru-

mental in helping the unit compile a substantial amount of arrests and seizures. During his time, the unit was credited with 396 total arrests, recovering 123 firearms, seizing 31 vehicles and collecting \$35,901 under Asset Forfeiture guidelines.

Mr. Speaker, Officer Keithley recently exhibited exceptional bravery while in the line of fire. Having been critically wounded, he courageously fought back and forced an armed criminal to flee the scene. I am honored to recognize Officer Gabriel Keithley today before Congress.

PRESIDENT'S DAY

HON. LAMAR S. SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last month America celebrated President's Day. In recognizing a generic holiday, though, perhaps we didn't take the time to focus on our first President, George Washington. A friend, advisor, constituent and cousin, Frates Seeligson of San Antonio, wrote an article for the San Antonio Express-News that conveys the greatness of the individual called, "First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen." I hope my colleagues and others will enjoy Mr. Seeligson's trenchant observations.

[From the San Antonio Express-News, Feb. 22, 2004]

OLYMPIAN IN WAR, SAGACIOUS IN PEACE

(By Frates Seeligson)

During the past three decades, knowledge and appreciation of George Washington have declined to an all-time low.

One survey has revealed that Washington's coverage in history textbooks has declined by 90 percent since the 1960s. One high school textbook has only a paragraph on George Washington but more than two pages on Marilyn Monroe.

For that reason, his birthday today is an appropriate time to remind ourselves about his wonderful contributions to America, which resulted in his being known as the "Father of his Country." It is even more appropriate at a time when we constantly are looking for role models.

Consider Washington's greatest services in the creation of our country:

For 8½ years, he commanded the Continental forces, which won our independence.

He presided over the constitutional convention that produced the document under which we live, and without his support it would not have been ratified.

He became the first president of the United States.

Washington was a magnificent horseman and looked every inch a general. He was one of the wealthiest men in America, yet he pledged his life, his future, his beloved Mount Vernon and his sacred honor to win our freedom. At one battle he stopped his retreating army, turned them around and fought the British to a draw.

The Marquis de Lafayette described the effect of Washington's arrival on the tired, discouraged, beaten men: "His presence stopped

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

the retreat. His fine appearance on horse, his calm courage, roused to animation by the vexations of the morning, gave him the air best calculated to excite enthusiasm."

Lafayette also recalled how later he "rode all along the lines amid the shouts of the soldiers cheering them by his voice and example and restoring to our standard the fortunes of the fight. I thought then, as now, that never had I beheld so superb a man."

After the war, no one knew whether the 13 states would separate into different countries or become one nation. The government under which they lived was basically a league of states absorbed in their own concerns.

The country found it impossible to operate under this type of government, and a constitutional convention was called.

Washington was already a legend.

As John Adams said: "He made every crowned head in Europe look like a valet. Noble, incorruptible, Olympian in war, sagacious in peace, he was the ideal man to preside over the convention."

The Constitution that the founding fathers created was absolutely new and revolutionary for its time. To create it was one thing; to get it ratified by the states was another. Washington's support was essential to its passage.

As he said: "It is too probable that no plan we propose will be adopted, perhaps another dreadful conflict is to be sustained."

"If to please the people, we offer what we ourselves disprove, how can we afterwards defend our work. Let us raise a standard to which the wise and the honest can repair."

Once the Constitution was ratified, most of the European powers felt there was no question it would be a failure.

They underestimated the first president. He guided the nation through its first eight years and set it on a course that has lasted to this day.

Washington's last service to his nation was to retire after two presidential terms.

To paraphrase what has been written before, there are two roads: one to absolutism and another road to democracy. On the first we see Napoleon and emperors, perpetual presidents, Mussolinis, Hitlers, Maos and directors of the proletariat advancing to band music to the death of political freedom.

On the other road, to democracy, there is a solitary figure in a rusty blue and buff uniform hasting to the happy halls of Mount Vernon.

All hail to Washington. First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen.

FREEDOM FOR MARIO ENRIQUE MAYO HERNÁNDEZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Mario Enrique Mayo Hernández, a prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Mayo Hernández is a lawyer by profession who was fired by the Castro dictatorship from his job as a lawyer because he believes in freedom and democracy. After being terminated for his democratic opinions, Mr. Mayo Hernández began working as an independent journalist so the world could understand the reality of Castro's hideous oppression. Using the limited tools of independent journalism in a totalitarian state, Mr. Mayo Hernández courageously wrote about the bleak, broken, society that is the result of the tyrannical policies of the Cuban totalitarian dictatorship. In order to better disseminate the truth about totalitarian Cuba, Mr. Mayo Hernández eventually became the director of the press agency "Félix Varela."

On March 18, 2003, as part of Castro's brutal March 2003 crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy activists, Mr. Mayo Hernández was arrested by the tyrant's police thugs. According to Amnesty International, he was accused of "creating conditions" that would allow the UN Commission on Human Rights to condemn the totalitarian regime for its gross human rights violations. In the sham trial that sentenced him to 20 years in the totalitarian gulag, Mr. Mayo Hernández was convicted because of "counterrevolutionary" articles on the abhorrent prison conditions and the situation of families of political prisoners.

Mr. Mayo Hernández is currently languishing in the oppressive conditions of the totalitarian gulag. According to Reporters Without Borders, Mr. Mayo Hernández has been held in conditions of "maximum harshness" that include being locked in solitary confinement, having to wait four months between family visits, and being transferred to a cell with common law criminals. Let there be no doubt, Mr. Mayo Hernández is being tortured in the totalitarian gulag. Because of his belief in freedom and democracy, because of his truthful depictions of the decrepit reality of the Castro regime, Mr. Mayo Hernández has been "sentenced" to 20 years in Castro's violent, corrupt, inhumane, totalitarian gulag.

Mr. Speaker, it is categorically unacceptable that peaceful pro-democracy activists languish in the gulags of tyrannical regimes. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate release of Mario Enrique Mayo Hernández and every prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

HONORING JULIE AND JIM TURNER

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, I attended the 10th Annual Awards Luncheon of the Senior Source, formerly known as Senior Citizens of Greater Dallas. At that event, the Senior Source presented its Spirit of Generations Award to Julie and Jim Turner, two highly respected citizens of Dallas.

Jim Turner, an internationally recognized leader in the soft drink industry, is CEO/President of the Dr. Pepper/Seven Up Bottling Group in Dallas. Over the years, Jim Turner and his company have been good corporate citizens and have made many contributions to the betterment of Dallas.

I would like to insert in the RECORD at this point the description of Julie and Jim Turner that appeared in the program marking the occasion of the presentation of the Generations Award.

JULIE AND JIM TURNER

Julie and Jim Turner work tirelessly to improve the well being of the community in which they live and conduct business. Throughout their 35 years of marriage, they

have given and received their energy from family, faith, and friends. And they have generously extended that strength to others. They have taken an active part in numerous nonprofit and corporate boards and are the force behind Dr. Pepper/Seven Up Bottling Group's outstanding role as a corporate citizen. In recognition of Julie and Jim Turner's contributions to the greater Dallas community, The Senior Source is pleased to honor them with the 10th Annual Spirit of Generations Award.

Jim Turner, an internationally recognized leader in the soft drink industry, is part owner and CEO/President of the Dr. Pepper/Seven Up Bottling Group. He has been recognized with the two most coveted awards in the beverage industry: Man of the Year from Beverage Industry and Beverage World's Hall of Fame. He has also received the nationally prestigious Horatio Alger Award, as well as the Russell H. Perry Free Enterprise Award, the Baylor University Distinguished Alumni Award, and has been inducted into the Baylor Sports Hall of Fame. He serves on the board of Baylor Health Care System, Boy Scouts of America Circle Ten Council, and Alzheimer's Association, among other local and national organizations.

Like her husband, Julie Turner is involved in the business affairs of the company and actively supports many local organizations. She serves on the boards of the Baylor Health Care System Foundation, Dallas Historical Society, is Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Dallas Baptist University, and is a member of the Crystal Charity Ball Committee. A former teacher, she has served as PTA President and was awarded Life-time Membership in the Texas PTA. She is committed to a number of local causes including, among others, American Heart Association, Kidney Texas, Inc., AWARE, and Dallas Symphony Association.

The Turners are members of Park Cities Baptist Church and enjoy family time with their daughters, Jenna and Amy, Amy's husband, Brent, and their new pride and joy, grandson Turner.

With the Spirit of Generations Award, The Senior Source is honoring this extraordinary couple for their selfless work throughout the greater Dallas area.

HONORING STEPPENWOLF THEATRE COMPANY

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Steppenwolf Theatre Company for three decades of excellence in Chicago's fine arts community for producing highly popular and consistently first-rate theatre.

Steppenwolf Theatre Company began performing plays in a church basement of Highland Park, Illinois back in 1974. With the leadership of Terry Kinney, Jeff Perry and Gary Sinise, the group incorporated in 1975 and has now grown to include thirty-five premier theater artists with wide-ranging and nationally recognized talent.

In that time, Steppenwolf Theatre has made Chicago proud time and again by making tremendous advancements in the vitality and diversity of American Theatre—both for its actors and its audience. Today, the city demonstrates its appreciation and continued patronage with a subscription base of 25,000 members and growing.

The Steppenwolf Theatre Company has evolved effortlessly with changing times, while maintaining relationships with established playwrights such as Sam Shepard, Lanford Wilson and Alan Ayckbourn. They have reinvented classics like John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, and more recently produced and developed the world premiere of *Man from Nebraska* by ensemble member Tracy Letts.

With their original principals of ensemble collaboration and artistic risk still flourishing, Steppenwolf now approaches its 30th anniversary as a professional theater company. The Company has been lavished with high praise from national and international media, art critics and audiences alike.

This persistent effort has earned Steppenwolf several prestigious awards. Most recently, they include the Joseph Jefferson Award for Chicago Theatre Excellence and the 2003 Equity Special Award for leadership in national and international acclaim for Chicago Theatre, and for excellent training and outreach programs, partnership and support of theatres, playwrights and artists new to the scene.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all proud residents of the Fifth District and the City of Chicago in congratulating the Steppenwolf Theatre Company on its many achievements in thirty years, and wish it continued success as it further solidifies its unique and landmark status in our great City.

HONORING THE LIFE AND CAREER
OF GEORGE R. TUCKER

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life's work of George R. Tucker, retiring as the Regional Director and Executive Secretary of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Ohio Council 8, AFL-CIO. Mr. Tucker has spent his career furthering the goals of organized labor in the struggle to improve the lives and livelihoods of the brothers and sisters and thus, make our Nation stronger.

AFL Founder Samuel Gompers explained in an 1898 speech, "To protect the workers in their inalienable rights to a higher and better life; to protect them, not only as equals before the law, but also in their health, their homes, their firesides, their liberties as men, as workers, as citizens; to overcome and conquer prejudices and antagonism; to secure to them the right to life, and the opportunity to maintain that life; the right to be full sharers in the abundance which is the result of their brain and brawn, and the civilization of which they are the founders and the mainstay. . . . The attainment of these is the glorious mission of the trade unions." His words ring as eloquently true in the dawn of the 21st century as they did in the waning of the 19th century. His words provide the blueprint by which labor leaders like George Tucker have always led, setting the economic and social achievements of the membership as a whole as their primary goal.

George Tucker completed high school at Toledo's Woodward High School and followed

that with service in the United States Navy. After more than two decades "in the trenches," he became the staff representative for AFSCME's Ohio Council 8 in 1984. In 1987 he took on the responsibilities of Regional Director, adding Executive Secretary in 2002. Other offices Mr. Tucker has held during his tenure with AFSCME Ohio Council 8 are Secretary-Treasurer and Regional Vice President. At the same time, he has served the Toledo Area AFL-CIO on its steering committee and executive board and as President. He also holds a position on the national AFL-CIO's advisory board. Mr. Tucker gives of his time and talents to the United Labor Committee, Northwest Ohio Center for Labor Management Cooperation, Toledo Labor Management Citizens Committee, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. In all these pursuits, he has championed the causes of better wages, benefits, and working conditions for the thousands of workers whose lives he has touched.

Mr. Tucker has not limited his service to the union movement; he is also a community leader. He has ably and actively served on the boards of the local EMS, Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Ohio Public Employers Lawyers Association, the Private Industry Council, United Way, Lucas County Democratic Party, Toledo Port Council, and the Down River Inter-City Hockey Club in Detroit and the Greater Toledo Amateur Hockey Association. He is a member of American Legion Post 110, Destroyer Escort Sailors Association, Augsburg Lutheran Church, and the Placers Car Club.

Reviewing the exhaustive list of George Tucker's civic activities, it is clear his retirement is most deserved and maybe a little bit welcome. We wish him a most enjoyable journey on this new path in his life. We hope he is able to spend time with his wife and their children and grandchildren, and pursue golfing and the hobby of antique cars with the same vigor with which he has pursued his public life. Even though he may be officially retiring, we know we can continue to count on George Tucker's learned wisdom and personal counsel. Our community has been bettered immeasurably as a result of his dedication and good cheer. Onward, friend.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION OF
EPOCH BY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with Congress that on Monday, April 19, 2004, District of Columbia Mayor Anthony A. Williams will publicly dedicate Epoch, a permanent monumental abstract steel sculpture by artist Albert Paley, which was recently installed in front of the PEPCO Headquarters at 9th and G Streets, NW. A poem by Dolores Kendrick, Poet Laureate of Washington, DC, is stamped into the metal structure of the sculpture. The genesis and placement of the text were determined through collaborative efforts between Ms. Kendrick and Mr. Paley. This project represents the second instance in which an African American woman has been honored by being prominently represented in a

public artwork in the District of Columbia. The first African American woman was Mary McLeod Bethune, whose sculpture is in Lincoln Park.

Epoch will serve as a major landmark in the heart of newly re-developed and revitalized downtown Washington, DC. Its location marks a major intersection for pedestrian and vehicular travel within the dynamic 7th Street Arts District, an area that is emerging as a hot and stylish destination for entertainment, retail, and culture. Epoch is installed across the street from the Smithsonian Museum of American Art/Portrait Gallery, the Gallery Place Metro Station, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, the main branch of the DC Public Library. This area also features the MCI Center Arena, the new Washington Convention Center, the City Museum of Washington, DC, the Washington Shakespeare Theatre, the Spy Museum, the National Mall, and a significant number of prominent art galleries, shops, and restaurants.

Epoch measures 25 feet high by 12 feet wide by 10 feet deep, approximately one and a half stories tall, and is painted in a vibrant multicolored palette featuring blue, yellow, purple and red-orange. The design of the sculpture was recommended by a special selection committee for the project that included community representatives and was approved by Commissioners of the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities (appointed by the Mayor of the District of Columbia) and the Commission of Fine Arts (appointed by the President of the U.S.A.).

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES MARSHALL

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend and constituent, a beloved citizen of Aransas Pass, Texas, an established entrepreneur, and a compassionate neighbor—Mr. Charles Marshall. He has served his town, its needy and especially, its children, for nearly half of a century.

I can think of no one more deserving of recognition for empowering a community with the best educational opportunities that can be bestowed upon its youngest citizens. It is the personal values he has held throughout his years of public service which enhance the contributions and unshakeable faith he has for the people of Aransas Pass.

Charlie Marshall was born July 7, 1923 in Skidmore, Texas. He attended public school in Raymondville and later graduated from Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos. He served his country in the Navy during World War II, serving for 3 years on a back-up troop transport in an operating room. After returning from the war, he threw himself into civilian life and enrolled in Landig Mortuary College in Houston, Texas—eventually rising to valedictorian and class president.

He moved to Aransas Pass in 1949 and went to work for Cage Funeral Home. In 1953, it became Cage-Marshall Funeral Homes. Thirty-five years later, in 1998, the Charlie Marshall Funeral Home and Crematory of Aransas Pass was officially dedicated. Charlie's professional commitment was recognized

by the State of Texas. He was appointed to the Texas State Board of Morticians by Governors Price Daniels, John Connally, Preston Smith and Dolph Briscoe.

Charlie knew Aransas Pass was a great place to live and that the area would flourish if it had a solid educational hub. So in May 1959, he ran and was elected to the school board. This position enabled him to use his ability to inspire, attract and engage students and parents to work together to support academic excellence, and enhance pride in their community. Mr. Marshall continues today to visit the school campuses and talk to the students. He attends the Panther Sports events and supports many school activities that provide young people a chance to represent their school and community.

In addition to his exemplary service to his profession and the local educational community, Charlie has also served in civic, charitable and social organizations which propel the community and its citizens to prosperity.

These organizations include the Veterans of Foreign Wars, where he received the Good Citizenship Award, and the Aransas Pass Chamber of Commerce, where he has served for many years as an officer. He is credited as the founder and early organizer of the Shrimpooree Festival, which continues to benefit San Patricio County. He was a distinguished director of the Overbid Property Trust, whose proceeds built the Aransas Pass Public Library. He was awarded the Aransas Pass Citizen of the Year Award 1972, and the coveted Murl Smith Award in 1981. Mr. Marshall was one of the founders of the Aransas Pass Associated Charities, which later grew into the Christian Service Center, serving thousands of needy families and children.

The citizens of Aransas Pass honored Mr. Marshall by naming an elementary school in recognition of his many community and educational contributions. It is my pleasure to pay homage to Charlie Marshall on the House Floor for his tireless efforts and 45 years of stellar leadership in education. I must also commend Charlie's late wife Gayle, his daughter, Marty, and son, Bill, who not only supported his service to Aransas Pass, but have shared his compassion and commitment.

I ask my Congressional Colleagues to join me in commending Mr. Charles Marshall for his exceptional career and contributions to the great State of Texas and our Nation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INTELLIGENCE TRANSFORMATION ACT OF 2004

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, today my colleagues and I on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence are initiating a call to action.

The problems plaguing American intelligence are too grave, and the potential damage to U.S. national security, force protection in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, too important to justify delay.

These problems require urgent attention from the President—who has the power to fix some identified problems with our intelligence

now—and from Congress, which built our Intelligence Community five decades ago to fight an enemy that no longer exists.

But those of us in Congress must also do our part.

That is why we are introducing a major legislative proposal—the Intelligence Transformation Act of 2004 (H.R. 4104)—a set of critical and urgent reforms for the Intelligence Community.

The highlight of this proposal is the creation of a Director of National Intelligence (a “DNI”), who has budgetary and statutory authority over the entire Intelligence Community. This is not a new idea. And it is not a Democratic idea. It was one of reforms recommended by the bipartisan, bicameral 9/11 Joint Congressional Inquiry.

But our legislation does more. We are also proposing “jointness” in collection, analysis and dissemination of intelligence. We believe that one of the major deficiencies in our Intelligence Community is the fact that there are fifteen intelligence agencies—operating with different rules, cultures, and databases—that do not work as one, integrated Intelligence Community.

We also believe that our Intelligence Community must leverage the power of information technology to help our intelligence professionals share data in real-time. The United States has the best IT capabilities in the world, but we have scarcely touched that potential to help the IC do its job.

Finally, the Act would create a new WMD Proliferation Threat Integration Center (PROTIC) to provide integrated tasking of collection and analysis on the WMD proliferation threat.

At a time when much of Washington is fingerpointing, we hope this legislation today will add some light to the heat surrounding the subject of intelligence failures.

We had hoped to produce a bipartisan bill—and we believe that it will ultimately be a bipartisan bill because it is good policy and because of its bipartisan parentage. We shared our legislative ideas with the majority on our Committee, but we did not want the legislative year to pass while awaiting their response.

The terrorists and the enemies of the United States will not wait until after November to plot their attacks—nor will they check our party registration before they launch those attacks against us. We cannot afford to wait. This task is urgent. We must act now.

HONORING LARRY LATTMAN,
NAPA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my good friend Larry Lattman. Mr. Lattman's outstanding contributions and dedication to our country are truly appreciated.

A highly regarded member of the community, Larry Lattman was born in Los Angeles, California. After graduating from high school he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps where he served with tremendous honor and valiance in the Korean War.

Larry Lattman is a member of the Marine Corps League, AMVETS, Jewish War Vet-

erans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars; he has a seat on the California Veterans Board and is a member of the National Legislative Committee of the American Legion. He served two terms with distinction as Chairperson of the Allied Council of the Veterans Home in Yountville. As Chair of the Allied Council Mr. Lattman appeared before California State Senate and Assembly Committees, speaking on the behalf of veterans more than 100 times.

Mr. Lattman's many trips to the legislature helped the Home receive needed funds for projects such as construction of new water and electric systems, improving the recreation building, cemetery renovations, and the purchase of a new x-ray machine as well as a whole host of other improvements.

In spite of severe physical limitations and major disabilities, he has distinguished himself as a selfless crusader on behalf of other veterans. He has demonstrated with distinction the creed, “Veterans Helping Veterans.”

Larry Lattman is being recognized this year for his outstanding contributions as a veteran's advocate by the Veterans Home during Yountville's Founders Day Celebration. He is being inducted into the Yountville Veteran Home's hall of fame, their highest honor.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we recognize Larry Lattman for his contributions and service to the people of our country.

A TRIBUTE TO SOUTH MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to proudly pay tribute to South Mountain High School, in Phoenix, Arizona, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

This distinguished school in the Phoenix Unified High School District first opened its doors in February of 1954. For the last five decades it has proudly served the educational needs of the students in south Phoenix and has become one of the most dynamic schools in the district, offering five magnet programs: aviation and aerospace education, law-related studies, performing arts (drama, music, and dance), visual arts (drawing, painting, ceramics, sculpture, computer art and photography), and communication art (print, radio, television and film).

From its student body to its administrative team, SMHS's history of success is lengthy. Accommodating up to 3,000 students at times, the school has been able to maintain one of the highest graduation and attendance rates in the district. In addition, throughout the years students at SMHS have consistently improved their test scores in every category.

The administrative staff at SMHS is also a reason to boast. Of the seven National Board Certified Teachers in the district, four teach at South Mountain. The school has produced the District Teacher of the Year for the past two years, and Assistant Principal Robert Estrada was named 2002 Arizona Class 5—A Athletic Director of the Year. Furthermore, the Administrative team at South Mountain has the longest tenure of any team in the district. Patricia Tobin, in her sixth year, has the second longest tenure as a current principle at a Phoenix Union school.

South Mountain High School's mission is "to create a community of learners." I am proud to say that SMHS has more than accomplished this mission and continues to produce tomorrow's leaders who proudly represent the home of the Jaguars.

Mr. Speaker, as you can surmise, South Mountain is a landmark in Phoenix with a successful past and a promising future that has served the needs of its diverse, dynamic and growing community. It has improved student achievement as well as effectively used human and fiscal resources. It continues to raise academic achievement and serves as a model high school for the nation. Therefore, I am pleased to pay tribute to South Mountain High School in Phoenix, Arizona, and I know my colleagues will join me in congratulating the student body, faculty, staff, administrators and alumni.

TRIBUTE TO HAZARD BULLDOGS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the players and coaches of the 2004 Hazard Bulldogs basketball team.

On February 8, 2004, the Hazard High School Bulldogs defeated Bishop Brossart High School by a score of 43-38 to win the Kentucky All "A" State Tournament. Under the leadership of Coach Kevin Spurlock, the Bulldogs finished the season with a record of 20-4. This is a remarkable accomplishment that merits recognition.

With 49 years since their last championship title, the Bulldogs' recent victory has been a long time in coming, and one that was attained through hard work and determination. During the entire championship game the Bulldogs fought ferociously, tying at the half and gaining a four-point lead after the third quarter. Smart, calculated plays during the final minutes pushed the Bulldogs over Bishop Brossart and secured a safe five-point win.

In Kentucky, basketball is something of an institution. It embodies a tremendous spirit of teamwork and dedication, and the Bulldogs have shown that they possess both characteristics. The Bluegrass State is widely known for producing great basketball teams, and the Hazard Bulldogs are no exception. Winning the state tournament marks a tremendous milestone in their journey for excellence, and I am proud of their accomplishment.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Bulldogs for their tremendous success, not only in tournament play but also throughout the entire season. Through their hard work, determination, and skill they have made Eastern Kentucky very proud. I ask each of my colleagues to join me in honoring Hazard High School, Coach Kevin Spurlock, all of the assistant coaches, and each and every talented player on the 2004 Championship Bulldog team: Hank Gabbard, Stephen Sizemore, Parker Carter, Eric Mullins, Robert Lyttle, J.J. Hously, Lamar Williams, Jon Francis, Chase Patrick, Durell Olinger, Justin Wallace, Chuckie Osteen, Jon Walker, Tyler Bailey, and Justin Hicks.

REMEMBERING MELINDA MONTGOMERY STRONG

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, Dr. Barbara Montgomery, noted educator, world traveler and lecturer, and leader in the local, State, and national Democratic Party, suffered the loss of her second child, Melinda Montgomery Strong. Melinda passed away in Watsonville, California on February 4th. Melinda's twin, Melody Montgomery Law, and her father, James Kenneth Montgomery, predeceased her.

As a special tribute, and following a traditional Indian farewell, Chief Tecumseh of the Shawnee Nation was quoted at Melinda's final rites. It is a beautiful and appropriate guideline for all of us—and especially for the beautiful Melinda Montgomery Strong:

So live your life that the fear of death can never enter your heart. Trouble no one about their religion; respect others in their view, and demand that they respect yours. Love your life, perfect your life, beautify all things in your life. Seek to make your life long and its purpose in the service of your people. Prepare a noble death song for the day when you go over the great divide. Always give a word or a sign of salute when meeting or passing a friend, even a stranger, when in a lonely place. Show respect to all people and grovel to none. When you arise in the morning give thanks for the food and for the joy of living. Sing your death song and die like a hero going home.

As a longtime friend and admirer of Dr. Montgomery, I ask that Congress adjourn today in memory of this beautiful life—and that we collectively send our condolences and our prayers to Dr. Barbara Montgomery.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF MRS. FANNIE BELLE CALLAHAN

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, Mobile County, Alabama, and indeed the entire First Congressional District recently lost a dear friend, and I rise today to honor her and pay tribute to her memory.

Fannie Belle Callahan was a devoted mother, grandmother, and friend to the Mobile community throughout her entire life. At the time of her passing on March 15, 2004, she had devoted 94 years to the care of her children, her family, and her city.

Raised with her three siblings in the small community of Crichton, Alabama, Mrs. Callahan was required at an early age to go to work to help support her family following the death of her father. By the age of 17, she had already worked as a telephone operator, a cashier at Mobile's Saenger Theater, and a night clerk at the Battle House Hotel. Following her marriage to Herbert Callahan, she moved to East St. Louis, Illinois, but returned to Mobile 3 years later when he obtained a job with the GM&O Railroad.

Widowed at the time of her husband's death in 1950, Mrs. Callahan was once again re-

quired to go to work to support her large family of nine children. Although she retired in 1965 after many years of employment with the Mobile District Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, she was not one to sit idly by and watch life go on in the world around her. She became actively involved in the political campaigns of her sons Sonny and George, and following Sonny's election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1984 volunteered her time as the receptionist in his Mobile district office. Mrs. Callahan quickly became the center of her son's office "family," and for the remainder of her life was always referred to affectionately as "Mom Callahan."

Throughout her 94 years, Fannie Belle Callahan taught many valuable lessons to her family and friends, and everyone who came in contact with her took away very fond memories of a charming southern lady who could make anyone to whom she was speaking feel they were the most important person at that time. In an article which appeared in the Mobile Register in 2000, Mrs. Callahan reflected on her long and rewarding life and spoke about how her years of hard work were rewarded with the successes her children enjoyed.

Many of her children were also interviewed and offered their perspectives on the lessons they had learned from the matriarch of a family made up of 94 men, women, and children. Perhaps her son, former Rep. Sonny Callahan, best summed up her long life and what she passed on to her children when he said, "She taught us responsibility. With nine kids, there had to be some degree of responsibility. She taught us to respect people and work hard."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a lovely woman who deeply loved, encouraged, and respected her many family and friends and the entire Mobile community. "Mom Callahan" will be deeply missed by her family—her sons, Sonny Callahan, George Callahan, Charles Callahan, and Terrance Callahan; her daughters, Patsy Dempster, Madeline Martin, Margaret Ann Athey, Mary Jane Emick, and Rose Callahan; and her 32 grandchildren, 56 great-grandchildren, and 13 great-great-grandchildren—as well as the countless friends she leaves behind. Our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this difficult time.

CONGRATULATING MS. PAULINE MORGAN AND MS. VANESSA DATES

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, is my distinguished honor and privilege to congratulate two residents of Northwest Indiana who have committed their careers to serving the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). Combined, Ms. Pauline Morgan and Ms. Vanessa Dates served the hard-working men and women of Northwest Indiana for over 71 years. Their efforts will be celebrated at a retirement reception on Friday, April 2, 2004.

Pauline Morgan began her career November 1, 1963, as a secretary in the District 31 office in East Chicago, Indiana. In 1973, she

became secretary to the Assistant Director of District 31 and became the Executive Secretary to the former District Director Jack Parton from 1986 to 1989. Pauline ended her career working out of the Gary, Indiana District 7 office from 1998 until the present. She ends her career with over 40 years of service to the USWA membership.

Outside of her duties at work, Pauline remains committed to improving her community through service. She serves the Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church as a greeter and anniversary chairperson, is a member of USWA Local 3657; the Steelworkers of Active Retirees, the Foundation of East Chicago Board and the Twin City Education Foundation Parental subcommittee. She has also served as a public relations representative for the East Chicago National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the United Citizens Organization.

Ventress Dates, who is retiring from the District 7 office after over 31 years of service began her career on June 16, 1972, in the former District 31 office in Harvey, Illinois. From there she worked in the Sub District 3 office in Chicago, Illinois for several years before transferring to the former District 31 office in East Chicago, Indiana. The office later relocated to its present location in Gary, Indiana. Ventress also held the position as the Executive Secretary to the former District 7 Director Jack Parton.

Ventress is affiliated with the Bethlehem Temple Missionary Baptist Church in Harvey, Illinois. She currently serves in the capacity of choir director, member and vocal instructor, a praise and worship team leader and an adult Sunday school instructor. She is a soloist, an evangelist, seminar, and workshop facilitator. Ventress is experienced in nursing home and youth ministry and belongs to the Wayman AME church ministry in Chicago, Illinois. She is affiliated with various women's groups, as well as her local Poet's Society. She is also an author and songwriter.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Pauline Morgan and Ventress Dates for their combined seven decades of service to the USWA. Their commitment to the hard-working men and women of Northwest Indiana helped the steel industry form the backbone of our economy for many years. Their efforts will surely be missed, and I am proud to represent them in Congress.

CONGRATULATING THE BOROUGH OF HUGHESTOWN ON ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and ask you to join me in congratulating the Borough of Hughestown in Luzerne County, PA on its 125th anniversary. The community will celebrate on Saturday evening with an anniversary celebration at Convention Hall in Pittston Township.

Hughestown was organized as a Borough on April 8, 1879. The Borough became well-known throughout the Commonwealth as part of the Pennsylvania Coal Company's famous

#9 Mines and Breaker, which employed most of the Borough's residents.

Hughestown residents suffered several major tragedies in and around the mines. The Borough also lost its firehouse, elementary school and high school to fire.

Despite the adversity, the Borough flourished. The past 125 years have brought many changes to the Borough community, and today Hughestown is home to about 30 small businesses and is looking forward to the development of new townhouses.

In addition, Hughestown is proud to have its native son State Rep. Thomas N. Tighe residing in the Borough.

Avoca, Dupont, Duryea, Pittston and Pittston Township border Hughestown. The Borough's geographic size—four square miles—makes it one of the smallest municipalities in the county. The population of the Borough is now 1,560. The Borough definitely represents the old adage that "Good things come in small packages."

I would like to congratulate the leadership of the Borough, including Mayor Paul Hindmarsh and Council Members Jerry Chilipko, Barbara Gatto, Vince Mammarella, Paul Murphy, Wayne Quick Jr., Sam Sanguedolce and Ed Strubeck. I would also like to recognize Police Chief Steve Golya, Fire Chief Jamie Merlino and Leonard Copp and Chris Ribaudo of the Street Department.

I would also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the leadership of the very first Borough Officers: Jacob B. Shmaltz, Charles Matthewson, John W. Williams, John B. Clark, George Gill, Cuthbert Snowden, Thomas Snowden, D.D. Moser, John Tishler, Aaron Oliver, John M. Mosier, Ernest Shmaltz and James Delaney.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask you and my esteemed colleagues to please join me in congratulating the Borough on their very special anniversary.

WELCOMING THE ACCESSION OF BULGARIA, ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, ROMANIA, SLO- VAKIA, AND SLOVENIA TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OR- GANIZATION

SPEECH OF

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to welcome the accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This is a truly historic occasion which transforms the strategic map of Europe, and strengthens the Atlantic Alliance.

In my first term in Congress, I cosponsored H. R. 4210, the NATO Participation Act of 1994. I believed then, as I continue to believe now, that NATO should be inclusive to all European nations that share our belief in democracy and the rule of law. Therefore, I am delighted to welcome the new member states to NATO.

NATO was established in 1949 for the purpose of countering the threat of Communist expansion. While that threat is now securely in the history books, the world has been forced

to face new, and different dangers. Throughout the myriad of changes in international relations since NATO was first founded, the salience of a strong alliance among friendly nations remains.

As is necessary with all longstanding organizations, NATO is changing with the times. It remains the world's most powerful regional defense alliance precisely because of its ability to adapt to new conditions. NATO continues to safeguard its member states through political and military means. However, over the past 15 years, the Organization has come to play a growing role in peacekeeping and crisis management.

Originally, NATO consisted of 12 member countries. Over the years the Organization has expanded twice. Once in 1952, to include Greece and Turkey, and a second time in 1955 to include West Germany. The simultaneous accession of seven states is the largest expansion in the history of the Organization. I, for one, hope that it will not take another 50 years before we see another round of NATO expansion.

The accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to NATO cements the increasingly strong relationship between the United States and those countries. The strengthening of the Atlantic Alliance is of benefit to all parties. Moreover, Congress looks forward to the opportunity to work closely together with the new countries for shared goals.

As the Vice-President of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, I have followed closely the progress of the new NATO member states. In the past, I have had the pleasure of visiting Romania and Slovakia. Later this month, I plan to visit the Baltic region and learn more about our newest alliance partners.

In conclusion, let me again state my wholehearted support for H. Res. 558, welcoming the accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I reiterate my hope that we will soon have occasion to celebrate the accession of more states into the Atlantic Alliance.

REGARDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN COMMEMORATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH 15, 2004

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, as we commemorate Women's History Month, it is of critical importance to note that the incidence of violence against women is still too high around the globe. Many women in the United States and in other nations live in terror, are afraid to speak up to protect their health and wellbeing, and are unable to shield their children from the effects of domestic violence.

The impact of violence against women of all social and economic classes worldwide is chilling. According to Amnesty International, 120 million women and girls are subjected to female circumcision annually, and over 700,000 women in the United States are

raped each year. Further, the World Bank reports that at least one in five women and girls have been sexually violated or beaten at some point in their lives. Violence against women is one of the world's most pervasive and yet least addressed human rights abuse issues. Women worldwide expend their energy, compromise their health and sacrifice their self-esteem due to the impact of domestic violence on their lives.

In 1993, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Article 1 defined violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life." Given this definition, and the evidence that women are more likely than men to be attacked by an intimate partner or family member to whom they are emotionally tied and economically dependent upon, it is incumbent upon those of us who are elected leaders to ensure the physical, emotional and financial stability of women everywhere.

The threat of violence extends to pregnant women, and is compounded in the treatment of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. As reported by the Center for Health and Gender Equity, a study of pregnant women in six African nations showed that the women's fear of rejection and domestic violence was responsible for their refusal to take AZT to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. The women surveyed declined to inform their families and friends about their HIV status because they feared being assaulted.

Around the world, too few women fail to seek adequate medical care, nor are they willing to share pertinent information about their experiences of domestic violence with healthcare providers for fear of retaliation from male partners or family members. We must work together on behalf of women everywhere to create an atmosphere free of the threat of violence where women can seek the care they need to safeguard their health and that of their children.

COMMEMORATING THE
STEINBRENNER INSTITUTE FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to take this time to commemorate the Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education and Research, a recently formulated institute at Carnegie Mellon University, which aims to improve the lives of Western Pennsylvanians through an ambitious long-term strategic plan to change the way society views environmental education. I am honored to extend my praise on behalf of this innovative and widely respected institute.

The Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education and Research initial focus will center itself around two environmental themes—the creation of energy and the preservation of the environment. Their efforts will be directed

towards improvements in electricity and energy for transportation and urban infrastructure in both developed and developing regions. The Institute will use non-traditional education and traditional research methods and results, to change the way society perceives and responds to environmental concerns.

The Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education and Research was made possible by a generous donation from Carnegie Mellon University Trustee, W. Lowell Steinbrenner. Mr. Steinbrenner and his wife, Jan, have pledged \$4 million last year for the creation of the Steinbrenner Institute. Along with continued support from within Carnegie Mellon University, the Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education and Research should prove to be one of the most valuable environmental institutions throughout all of Pennsylvania.

I ask that all of my colleagues to join me in honoring this innovative and valuable institution. Through meaningful education and research the Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education and Research will aid in the solution of countless environmental concerns in Western Pennsylvania for years to come.

INTRODUCING THE CLEAN CRUISE
SHIP ACT OF 2004

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, many Americans enjoy taking cruises, in large part because they get to see some of the nation's most beautiful marine ecosystems. Because I want to see these beautiful marine ecosystems protected for future generations to enjoy, I am introducing The Clean Cruise Ship Act of 2004.

The Cruise Ship Industry has experienced much success over the past few years. In fact, the industry has grown at about an average of 10 percent over the past seven years, including an almost 17 percent increase in 2000. Unfortunately, as it grows, its potential to negatively affect the marine environment grows as well. Over a week's time, a single 3,000 passenger cruise ship, according to EPA and industry data, generates a tremendous amount of waste: Over 200,000 gallons of black water (raw sewage) are created. Approximately 1 million gallons of gray water (runoff from showers, sinks and dishwashers) are produced. More than 35,000 gallons of oily bilge water (oil and chemicals from engine maintenance that collect in the bottom of ships and are toxic to marine life) are generated. Isn't it reasonable to think that these ships should be subject to the same wastewater regulations as those governing municipalities of comparable size? I think so.

While many cruise ship companies have environmental policies in place, many are voluntary with no monitoring or enforcement provisions. Unfortunately, I am all too familiar with the down-side to voluntary agreements, as a cruise ship illegally discharged—breaking its voluntary agreement—into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary in 2002. Simply put, voluntary agreements between cruise lines and states aren't enough to ensure protection of our oceans. The public deserves more than industry's claims of environmental performance. We need a federal law and we

need it now. It's time we strengthen the environmental regulations and in so doing, bring these floating cities in line with current pollution treatment standards. The Clean Cruise Ship Act of 2004 is the answer.

The legislation that I am introducing today, which has bipartisan support and is endorsed by over 30 local and national groups, plugs existing loopholes in federal laws, requires ships to treat their wastewater wherever they operate, and authorizes broadened enforcement authority. Several states including California, Alaska, Hawaii, Maine, and Washington are currently considering legislation to better regulate various cruise ship wastes—similar to the legislation I am introducing today. In fact, I am proud to report that California is leading the country in protecting its coastal waters from cruise ship pollution. Introduction of the Clean Cruise Ship Act of 2004 is one of the ways that I am working to provide all states the kinds of ocean and coastal protections that Californians benefit from. Enactment of this bill will protect California's tourism industry by making sure that the beaches and oceans, two of the attractions that make California the most visited state in our country, will be protected from cruise ship pollution. Simply put, this legislation ensures two things: (1) a sustainable future for our oceans, and (2) a sustainable future for the cruise and tourism industry.

This legislation promotes the public interest for all Americans. The public deserves clean water—both in our inland waterways and in our oceans. The Clean Cruise Ship Act of 2004, through its discharge standards, will give the public what it deserves.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this critically important legislation.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ALLEN LEE
BELL

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to pay tribute today to the life and memory of Allen Bell of Glenwood Springs, Colorado, who passed away recently at the age of sixty-one. A well-known radio broadcaster in Glenwood Springs, Allen touched the lives of many in his community. As his family and Glenwood Springs community mourn his passing, I believe it is appropriate to recognize the life of this colorful man, and his many contributions to his community and state.

Allen grew up in California, and served in the Air Force where he developed a love for radio and aviation. For thirty-five years Allen enjoyed a professional broadcasting career, spending twenty-six of those years in Glenwood Springs as president and general manager of KMTS/KGLN radio stations. He built and maintained the microwave station on Red Mountain, was a member of the Ham Radio Club of Glenwood Springs, and enjoyed building model planes and rockets. An active member in the community, Allen always was willing to volunteer his time to community service projects.

Mr. Speaker, we are all terribly saddened by Allen Bell's passing, but can be comforted in

knowing that he brought much joy to his Glenwood Springs community. I would like to extend my heartfelt sorrow to his wife Connie, his mother Nella and stepfather Hal, his son Christopher, and his brother Mark during this difficult time of bereavement.

TRIBUTE TO CLAUD CASH

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, public officials are held to a higher standard. We are held to a higher standard because we have been selected by our neighbors and our communities to serve their interests.

Claud Cash was an elected official who exceeded the high standards his constituents laid before him. His death took a pillar of the community from us; he was a leader in the state of Arkansas and an example of how to serve those we represent.

Mr. Cash served as past presidents of the Trumann Lions Club and the MidSouth Farm Equipment Dealers Association and on the Boards of Directors for Liberty Bank and St. Bernard's Foundation Board. He was a member of the First Baptist Church in Jonesboro, AR, the University Heights Lions Club and Trumann Masonic Lodge #693.

As a public servant, Mr. Cash served two terms in the Arkansas House of Representatives where he became the first freshman representative to be elected to the Joint Budget Committee. He later served one term in the Arkansas Senate. Throughout his public service, Mr. Cash had a reputation for bipartisan leadership, an unwavering dedication to his constituents and a sharp, legislative mind.

His business dealings were honorable and he was trusted by friends and competitors alike. His word was his bond as was the gold-
en rule.

As we recall Mr. Cash's exceptional career, we find his accomplishments as an elected official pale only in comparison to his strong devotion to his family and his community. On behalf of the Congress, I extend sympathies to his family, and gratitude for all he did to make the world a better place.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NO OIL PRODUCING AND EXPORTING CARTELS ("NOPEC") ACT OF 2004

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels (NOPEC)" Act of 2004, legislation that subjects a group of competing oil producers, like the OPEC nations, to U.S. antitrust law when they act together to restrict supply or set prices. I am joined by Representatives LOFGREN and MCINTYRE.

In recent days, American consumers have paid exorbitant prices at the pump, as gas prices have hit their highest levels since the first Gulf War. Since January, oil prices have climbed more than fifteen percent, driving gas-

oline prices in the United States to record levels while producing budget surpluses in nations like Saudi Arabia.

The group of eleven nations comprising OPEC are a classic definition of a cartel, and they hold all the cards when it comes to oil and gas prices. OPEC accounts for more than a third of global oil production, and OPEC's oil exports represent about 55 percent of the oil traded internationally. This makes OPEC's influence on the oil market dominant, especially when it decides to reduce or increase its levels of production.

And this is exactly what OPEC has decided to do again. Just today OPEC announced that it will cut its production target by 4 percent—or by 1 million barrels per day—starting in April. This move will undoubtedly drive our oil and gasoline prices through the roof.

The OPEC nations have for years conspired to drive up prices of imported crude oil, gouging American consumers. Their price-fixing and supply-limiting conspiracy is a clear violation of U.S. antitrust laws, yet we have no recourse for action against these nations. The international oil cartel continues to avoid accountability, shielding itself behind the veil of sovereign immunity by claiming that its actions are "governmental activity"—which is protected under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act ("FSIA"), 28 U.S.C. § 1602 et seq.—rather than "commercial activity."

This legislation, the "No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act" ("NOPEC"), is simple and effective. It exempts OPEC and other nations from the provisions of FSIA to the extent those governments are engaged in price-fixing and other anticompetitive activities with regard to pricing, production and distribution of petroleum products. It makes clear that the so-called "Act of State" doctrine does not prevent courts from ruling on antitrust charges brought against foreign governments and that foreign governments are "persons" subject to suit under the antitrust laws. It authorizes lawsuits in U.S. Federal court against oil cartel members by the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission.

We do not have to stand by and watch OPEC dictate the price of our gas without any recourse; we can do something to combat this conspiracy among oil-rich nations. I am hopeful that Congress can move quickly to enact this worthwhile and timely legislation.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ALAMOSA HIGH SCHOOL ADVANCED PLACEMENT AMERICAN GOVERNMENT STUDENTS

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay tribute to a truly talented class of students from Alamosa, Colorado. The students from teacher Buckley Bangert's Advanced Placement American Government class recently competed in an annual competition that teaches high school students about the Constitution. These motivated students have taken an active interest in our country's political process, and I would like to join my colleagues here today in recognizing their tremendous achievements before this body of Congress.

Alamosa High School Advanced Placement Government students studied for months to prepare for their roles as constitutional expert witnesses in simulated congressional hearings. Students addressed issues such as the development and expansion of the Bill of Rights, and the historical and philosophical ideas that underlie the Constitution. The students placed first in the district competition, and tied for fourth place at the State competition. The Alamosa students' prowess and extensive knowledge attracted the attention of the State judges, who extolled the team for achieving one of the highest scores for a first time attempt at the State level.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to honor the students from Alamosa High School for their remarkable achievements in the constitutional competition. The dedication of the students and their teacher, Buckley Bangert, are certainly commendable, and it is with great pleasure I recognize them today before this body of Congress and this nation. I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO DOYLE AND RAYE ROGERS

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, today more than ever, we must recognize commitments made by Americans who realize the best way to grow an economy is through continued investment infrastructure. I rise today to pay tribute to a great business and civic leader and a great Arkansan; I am honored to recognize Doyle Rogers in the Congress.

In a day and age when the presiding belief is in order to grow up and succeed you must escape Rural America, Doyle Rogers and his family lived in Batesville, Arkansas for more than 50 years, proving success comes with hard work, not a change of zip code.

His commitment to local business development is unparalleled. Mr. Rogers has started many businesses in Batesville—including the one which bares his name, the Doyle Rogers Company, a commercial real estate development firm. It was with that company in 1982 he developed and opened the Excelsior Hotel, now the Peabody Hotel, and the adjoining Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock.

The opening of the Peabody—one of the finest hotels in the country—would suffice as anyone's crowning achievement, but Mr. Rogers did so much more. He bought Metropolitan National Bank, headquartered in Little Rock, in 1983. Today, it is Central Arkansas' largest independently-owned bank employing more than 350 people. In 1985, he developed the 25-story Rogers Building, now the Stephens Building, in downtown Little Rock.

He holds honorary doctorates from Lyon College in Batesville and Philander Smith College in Little Rock. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees of Hendrix College and has served on the Advisory Board of the School of Business at the University of Arkansas. He has served as the President of the Batesville Chamber of Commerce.

In 2001, he was named Business and Professional Person of the Year by the Rotary Club in Little Rock and was presented the William F. Rector Memorial Award by Fifty For

the Future, a group of business and professional leaders in Greater Little Rock.

Doyle Rogers and his wife Josephine Raye Rogers have proved like-minded people tend to attract each other. In 2001, the White River Medical Center in Batesville received a unique Valentine's Day gift when Doyle Rogers and his wife Raye announced a gift of \$1 million to the hospital. It is the largest gift in the hospital's 25-year history. The gift was used as seed money for the Josephine Raye Rogers Center for Women and Imaging.

Raye, as she's known to her friends, complements Doyle well, proving her commitment to the community is as strong as her love for her husband. The Rogers' are truly a perfect match—and a shining example of the compassion our country occasionally lacks.

Mr. Rogers knows the people of Rural America will move this country ahead. He is a great business man, an impassioned community leader and a devoted family man. On behalf of the Congress, I extend a deep sense of appreciation for all he did to drive Arkansas and this nation forward.

INTRODUCING THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONNECTIONS CAMPAIGN ACT OF 2004

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Domestic Violence Connections Campaign Act" of 2004, legislation that ensures that the National Domestic Violence Hotline continues to provide the essential services it has been providing since it was created in 1996. I am joined by Representative HART.

The Hotline was created by the Violence Against Women Act and answered its first call on February 21, 1996. By August 2003 it answered its one millionth call, an increase of approximately 133 percent. This is due in large part to public awareness of domestic violence and public promotion of the Hotline. Today, on average the Hotline receives almost 16,000 calls a month.

The Hotline is primarily funded by federal dollars that come from annual federal spending bills. However, as the Hotline's call volume continues to increase exponentially, funding has failed to keep pace. To keep up, the Hotline needs new equipment, new connection capability, and new data protection technology. Because its system is so outdated, over 26,000 calls last year went unanswered due to long hold times or busy signals.

The Connection Campaign is a combination of public and private efforts to bring the Hotline up to speed. It teams up private telecommunication and technology companies with the federal government to solve the Hotline's crisis and guarantee that the Hotline can answer every call. Under the Connection Campaign, companies like Microsoft, Sony, BellSouth, Verizon Wireless, IBM, Dell and others, may donate hardware and software such as cell phones, home computers, mapping software, flat-screened monitors, and telephone airtime to the Hotline.

On the public side of the partnership, Representative HART and I are joining Senator

BIDEN in introducing legislation to bridge the digital divide. Our bill, the Domestic Violence Connections Campaign Act of 2004, has three components:

It mandates that federal appropriations to be used to review and analyze data generated by the Hotline include technology training for Hotline advocates so that every new telephone, computer, and database will be used to its fullest capacity.

It provides a new research grant program to be used to review and analyze data generated by the Hotline. Administered by the Attorney General, the grant program will study trends, gaps in service and geographical areas of need. The findings of this research will be reported to Congress within 3 years of its enactment.

It provides a grant program for the Hotline to increase public awareness about the Hotline's services and domestic violence generally.

The Connections Campaign and this legislation are important next steps in our fight to defeat domestic violence and assist victims. I am hopeful that Congress can move quickly to enact this worthwhile and timely legislation.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO PHYLLIS TAYLOR

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute and thank Phyllis Taylor for her leadership and contributions to Aspen, Colorado, as principal of Aspen Middle School. I would also like to pay tribute to her excellent 40-year career in education and service to her Aspen community. As Phyllis celebrates her retirement, let it be known that the citizens of Colorado and I are eternally grateful for the outstanding work she has done in her 40-year career as an educator in Aspen.

Phyllis Taylor will leave Aspen Middle School at the end of this school year after a 2-year tenure, in which she helped to maintain the high level of achievement of the Aspen School District. The school routinely ranks in the top tier of Colorado school systems for academic performance. In fact, last fall Aspen Middle School was awarded the John Irwin Schools of Excellence Award, which is issued to schools that perform in the top 8 percent of Colorado public schools. This was the first time the school had received this award. As she retires to spend more time with her family, Phyllis Taylor's skills as an educator will surely be missed.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to bring the service of Phyllis Taylor to the attention of this body of Congress and this Nation, and to congratulate her on an outstanding career as an educator in Colorado. I would like to wish her the best in retirement and sincerely thank her for her service.

PFC LEROY SANDOVAL JR.

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Pfc. Leroy Sandoval Jr., who died while bravely serving our country in Iraq.

Pfc. Sandoval was from Houston, Texas and graduated in 2000 from Harvest Christian Academy. He joined the Marines on May 19, 2003 and attended basic training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego. Pfc. Sandoval was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, in Camp Pendleton, California.

On March 26, 2004, less than 2 weeks after arriving in Iraq, Pfc. Sandoval suffered a fatal bullet wound in a gunfight between the 600 Marines stationed in Fallujah, Iraq, and rebel insurgents.

I know his parents, family and friends are devastated by this loss, but Pfc. Sandoval's family can be proud knowing that he died a hero while serving his country.

His loss will be felt by all of Houston, our state, and our Nation, and I ask that you remember the family in your thoughts and prayers.

TRIBUTE TO MR. CHESTER MILAM

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Chester Milam, a notable citizen of Knoxville, Tennessee as well as a distinguished man in my home area of Oakland County, Michigan. Mr. Milam has owned and maintained Wendell's Barber Shop in Lathrup Village for the past 47 years and has recently announced he's retiring.

Mr. Milam has committed professionally to serve a loyal group of Oakland county customers, including me, for 37 years. He has played a significant role in our community, serving politicians, civic leaders, sports figures from the Detroit Red Wings, the Lions, and the Tigers, and not to mention people from every level of the community.

For the last nine years, Mr. Milam has driven 1,200 miles round trip, returning to Michigan from his home in Tennessee, one week per month to continue the loyal service to his community. Not only has he taken great pride in his business, he has taken great pride in his customers, providing his own personal touch and great stories.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Mr. Chester Milam on his retirement and his many years of dedication to serving the people of Oakland County, Michigan and extend our best wishes.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JANET
IRVINE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Grand Junction, Colorado resident Janet Irvine for her tireless efforts to maintain the morale of our troops overseas, and to better her Grand Junction community. Through the volunteer organization AdoptaPlatoon, she sends her homemade cookies to soldiers overseas, and keeps a regular correspondence with many of them.

Janet began her efforts to help our troops in 1999, when she joined AdoptaPlatoon, a volunteer group that links citizens to soldiers and platoons in need of support, and began sending her homemade cookies to small groups of soldiers. Over time, more and more troops from different platoons heard about Janet's delicious cookies, and now she regularly keeps seventy-five to one hundred-fifty troops supplied with cookies.

Recently, the availability of email to troops has increased the frequency with which Janet can correspond with them. In response to her dedication, a platoon stationed in Kandahar, Afghanistan flew the flag over Fort Apache in her honor on March 12, 2003. Janet works to encourage others to serve the troops by talking to classes at area schools.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the selfless dedication and commitment Janet Irvine has demonstrated to our troops before this body of Congress and this nation. Her efforts to brighten the lives of our troops overseas are truly remarkable. I sincerely thank her for her efforts and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

RECOGNITION OF THE DAVILA
FAMILY

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Davila Family, a family that has contributed to the San Antonio community for 100 years. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the significant impact that this family has made on San Antonio for a century.

In 1904, the Davila Family opened its first business, a small grocery store, in San Antonio's Westside. This laid the foundation for a long and fruitful relationship with the community. Frank Davila Sr. and his wife, Mary Louise, opened this store at the corner of El Paso and Colorado Streets, the heart of the Westside.

Over time, this little community grocery store grew and evolved with the city. The family-owned operation grew into four grocery stores and the very popular Davila's and The Derby Drive-Ins. This expansion blossomed under the skillful guidance of Rodolfo Davila Sr. and his wife Delia.

With each new generation of Davilas, the family enterprise has continued to find new

ways to serve the community. In 1955, Rodolfo Davila Jr. opened the Davila Pharmacy four blocks from the original Davila Food Store. Now, the pharmacy is run by the fourth generation of the Davila Family, Rudy III and Rosette. They have become a vital component of the Westside by providing important healthcare services to their neighbors.

I am proud to celebrate the on-going tradition of the Davila Family and I value the impact that they have had on individual San Antonians' lives for a century. I wish them many blessings for continued success and strength as our beautiful city continues to grow and change. There is no doubt that the Davila Family will continue to thrive and evolve along with San Antonio, maintaining a legacy that will be remembered and appreciated for generations.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MIGRA-
TORY BIRD TREATY REFORM
ACT OF 2004: MARCH 31, 2004

HON. WAYNE T. GILCHREST

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to reform the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) to clarify that human introduced exotic avian species are not covered by the provisions of this landmark law.

The United States is currently a party to four international treaties to protect and conserve populations of migratory birds. Two years after the signing of the first treaty with Great Britain, Congress enacted the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. This act is our domestic implementing law and it statutorily commits this Nation to the proper management of certain families and species of birds.

After reviewing these treaties, it is clear that the list of covered species is not exhaustive, there is an inconsistency between migratory and nonmigratory birds and no distinction is made between exotic and native species.

Despite this fact, for over 80 years, there has never been a debate over whether exotic species should be protected under this act. Federal wildlife authorities have consistently treated exotic birds as falling outside of the provisions of the MBTA.

However, three years ago, a U.S. District Court of Appeals Judge, in the Hill v. Norton case turned this policy on its head by ruling that exotic mute swans, which are native to Europe and Asia, are covered because they are in the same avian family as native tundra and trumpeter swans.

As a result, neither the States nor the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can effectively manage mute swans. This species contributes to the degradation of Chesapeake Bay habitats by consuming large amounts of submerged aquatic vegetation and has destroyed nests and young of Maryland-stated listed native colonial waterbirds: least terns and black skimmers. The population of exotic mute swans has dramatically increased in the Chesapeake Bay from five birds that escaped captivity in 1962 to more than 3,600 today. There are more than 14,000 mute swans living in the Atlantic flyway.

As a result of this Federal court decision, an argument can now be made to apply the

MBTA provisions to other introduced, feral populations of exotic birds, such as, Eurasian collared doves, house sparrows, English starlings, Muscovy ducks, pigeons and a host of other species. These species were introduced by humans after the enactment of the 1918 Act and to varying degrees they are extremely destructive to the ecosystems in which they reside. Pigeons, or rock doves, are alone responsible for up to \$1.1 billion annually in damages to private and public property. They are the single most destructive bird in the United States.

On December 16th of last year, my Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans conducted an oversight hearing on exotic bird species and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. At that hearing, a diverse group of witnesses testified that Congress must reform the 1918 statute. For instance, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service testified that "affording the protection of the MBTA to introduced birds that are not native to the United States is ecologically unsound, contrary to the stated purposes of the MBTA and contrary to efforts by the Federal government to control invasive species".

It is my firm belief that it makes absolutely no sense to spend millions of dollars trying to control nonnative invasive species like the snakehead, brown tree snake, nutria, mitten crab, asian carp and zebra mussels, while at the same time expending precious resources to achieve the same conservation standards afforded native species under the MBTA for introduced avian species. States are ready to work with Federal and local governments to control populations of exotic birds. Following this hearing, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, which represents all 50 States, submitted a statement indicating that "The Association would strongly support congressional intervention to clarify that certain exotic species of birds are not covered under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act".

Exotic, invasive species are having a huge impact on this Nation's native wildlife and fisheries, economic interests, infrastructure and human health. In fact, it has been estimated they are costing our economy about \$100 billion each year.

Mr. Speaker, I have carefully read the testimony and concluded that we can not idly sit by and allow exotic species to undermine the fundamental core of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act which is to conserve native species. My bill is a simple common sense solution. It will restore a nearly century-old policy that reserves the application of the MBTA to native species. It will again allow Federal and State wildlife biologists to effectively manage exotic species at levels that do not conflict with the Federal and State obligations to conserve native species and habitats.

My bill has been endorsed by a number of governmental, conservation and environmental groups including the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the American Bird Conservancy, the Izaak Walton League, the Maryland Ornithological Society, Environmental Defense, the Nature Conservancy and the National Wildlife Federation. I urge my colleagues to join with me in support of the Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2004.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN
BURRITT

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to John Burritt of Redlands Mesa, Colorado for his remarkable achievements as an American pioneer in the biathlon and his work with the youth in his community. His 14th place finish in the 20-kilometer biathlon at the 1960 Winter Olympics was the highest American finish to that date in the typically European dominated sport, and has since been matched only twice. It is John's commitment to excellence which enabled him to compete in his sport at the international level, and to help shape the history of American athletics.

John came to the sport of biathlon, a sport that combines cross-country skiing and shooting over often rugged, grueling terrain, through a somewhat unorthodox path. Although he grew up enjoying cross-country skiing and hunting on his family's Redlands Mesa farm, he did not come to the biathlon until his days at Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado. John began practicing with the cross-country skiing team to improve his conditioning, and in 1956, at the invitation of a US Army colonel, he competed in the first biathlon race ever staged in the United States at Camp Hale.

John continued his training after college while he served his country in the U.S. Army, which allowed him to compete at the international level, specifically on the US team at the 1959 World Championships in Courmayeur, Italy. After finishing his military career, John qualified for a place on the 1960 Olympic team, where he finished 14th in the 20 kilometer biathlon at Squaw Valley. Since his retirement from competition in 1964, John has continued to stay active in cross-country skiing, spending this past winter teaching the sport to local children.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the achievements of John Burritt in front of this body of Congress and this nation, and to thank him for his contributions to the great tradition of athletics in Colorado and the United States. His efforts to instill the love of cross-country skiing in the youth of his community are commendable, and I sincerely thank him for his contributions to the sport. I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF KEVIN BAKER

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who has distinguished himself as a dedicated and dynamic educator. Kevin Baker of Springfield, Missouri, is not only an eighth grade social studies teacher and basketball coach, but an innovator and motivator. For the past 20 years, Baker has found ingenious ways to recreate American history for his students at Pershing Middle School while motivating them to become responsible, caring

individuals. Baker's tireless efforts to help his students meet their full potential helps build active and responsible citizens with unwavering values and discipline.

Kevin Baker is perceived by the students and staff of Pershing Middle School as the most patriotic person they have ever met. Everyday he arrives at school adorned in red, white and blue attire and drives a vehicle covered with U.S. flags. But Baker's patriotism is not simply for show. His love for this country is demonstrated each day as he shares his passion for American history. Baker pushes his students to excel academically and socially, and commands respect by his unfailing integrity and enthusiasm. His positive attitude is contagious.

Learning social studies is "fun" in Kevin Baker's classroom. Every year Baker takes the eighth grade students at Pershing on a field trip to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. For weeks beforehand, Baker drills his students, transforming them into a well-trained army that marches with wooden muskets to noted battlefield locations. In addition to his efforts to bring the Civil War to life, Baker also organizes and chaperones over 150 students on a trip to Washington, D.C. during Spring Break. This annual trip, which Baker initiated during his first year at Pershing, has long since become an institution. This year will mark his 20th student trip to our Nation's Capital.

Kevin Baker not only encourages his students, but also other teachers. His professionalism and expertise as a master educator in social studies is regarded highly by his community. Baker spends his summers planning and writing new Power Point presentations to complement the district's social studies curriculum, and his peers often ask him to share these presentations, as well as other classroom teaching techniques and tools, at district professional development meetings.

Kim Finch, the principal at Pershing Middle School, praises Kevin Baker as a bright, inquisitive and multi-talented teacher who enables his students to blossom academically. Finch also commends Baker as a positive role model for both students and staff, practicing daily in his own life what he teaches in the classroom.

Springfield and Pershing Middle School are lucky to call Kevin Baker one of their own. He is a valuable and cherished member of our community and nation.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE GUYANTE,
CITY MANAGER, CITY OF CORONA

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Corona, California are exceptional. Corona has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. George Guyante is one of these individuals. On Wednesday, April 1, 2004, he will be honored at a retirement reception.

George has called many places "home" during his life, having grown up in a military

family. He followed in his father's footsteps and joined the Army and later attended Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. After receiving his degree in city and regional planning he obtained a job as a planning technician for the City of Corona in 1976.

In 1978, George started the city's Redevelopment Agency which later encompassed an economic development division as well. During his time he helped create Team Corona, a marketing and retention program designed to attract businesses and create jobs through the agency. Under his leadership Corona experienced and managed a period of high growth. The city grew from 27,000 to 140,000 during his tenure and continues to experience booming housing and commercial markets.

In May 2001, after serving as the interim city manager since November 2000, the City Council appointed George city manager after considering 44 other applicants. Under his guidance the city has worked to improve transportation, provide ample park areas for residents, provide affordable housing to low-income residents, and help the homeless.

George's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Corona, California. He has been the heart and soul of many community projects and events and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him as he retires.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DAVID
McDONNALL

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise before you today to pay tribute to the life and memory of David McDonnall, an extraordinary American who was one of four Baptist missionaries killed in Iraq on March 15 by unknown assailants. His wife of less than one year, Carrie Taylor McDonnall, was also seriously wounded in the attack. While we mourn the loss of David and his fellow missionaries, I think it is appropriate to call the attention of this body of Congress and this nation the sacrifices David made for his country and the people of Iraq.

David grew up in Lamar, Colorado, and graduated from Lamar High School in 1993. Motivated by a desire to serve those in need and help rebuild the country, David and Carrie traveled to Iraq this last November, even though they knew there was a possibility they could be harmed. Their selfless efforts while in Iraq included distributing food, organizing relief projects, and renovating schools. When David and his group were attacked, they were searching for a suitable sight for a water purification project for the Iraqi people in Mosul.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise before this body of Congress and pay tribute to the life and memory of David McDonnall. His personal sacrifice is a testament to the love he had for his fellow man, and will not go in vain as others continue his noble work in Iraq. My thoughts are with his loved ones during this difficult time of bereavement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DOUG OSE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 29, 2004, I missed Rollcall votes 94 and 95. Had I been here, I would have voted "aye" on Rollcall 94; and "aye" on Rollcall 95.

INTRODUCING THE "AFGHAN WOMEN SECURITY AND FREEDOM ACT OF 2004"

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today I, along with my colleagues Representative TOM DAVIS (R-VA) and Representative CORRINE BROWN (D-FL), introduce the "Afghan Women Security and Freedom Act of 2004" which would authorize \$300 million each year from FY2005 through FY2007 for programs in Afghanistan that benefit women and girls. The funding would be directed toward legal assistance for women, enforcing provisions of the Afghan constitution pertaining to women's rights, encouraging the registration of women voters, and providing equipment to reduce infant and maternal mortality, among other provisions. This legislation was introduced earlier this year in the Senate by Senator BARBARA BOXER (D-CA).

Women's rights in Afghanistan have fluctuated greatly over the years. Women have bravely fought the forces of extremism at various points in the country's turbulent history. At one time, women were scientists and university professors. They led corporations and nonprofit organizations in local communities.

While the new Afghan constitution guarantees equality for Afghan women, throughout Afghanistan, women continue to face intimidation, discrimination, and violence. The United States has an obligation to ensure that women and girls have the opportunities that they were denied under the Taliban and that the gains that have been made are not lost in the coming months and years. It is imperative that we provide the support needed to ensure that the rights of women are protected in the new Afghanistan.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THELMA STARNER

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to honor Thelma Starnier for her selfless dedication to the community of Delta, Colorado, and congratulate her on being recognized by the Delta City Chamber as their Humanitarian of the Year. The award is presented to an individual who has shown an outstanding commitment to the Delta community, and Thelma could not be a more worthy recipient. It is a privilege to pay tribute to Thel-

ma for her well-deserved award, and her ongoing efforts to better her community today.

Thelma owned and operated Delta Sand & Gravel for twenty-five years. As an active member in her community, she dedicates her time to a vast array of civic functions. Thelma has served as president of the Delta Chamber, Western Colorado Community Foundation, and Altrusa International of Delta; and is current president of the hospital's board of directors and of the board of Tri-County Resource Center. Thelma also was a founding board member of West Central Housing Development Organization and Delta Area Development Inc. Her enthusiasm for taking part in these organizations comes from the joy she receives in giving back to the community she loves.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Thelma before this body of Congress and this nation for the recognition she received by the Delta City Chamber as their Humanitarian of the Year. She has done much to improve her community, and I wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

INTRODUCING THE AMERICAN JUSTICE FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the American Justice for American Citizens Act, which exercises Congress's Constitutional authority to regulate the federal judiciary to ensure that federal judges base their decisions solely on American Constitutional, statutory, and traditional common law. Federal judges increasing practice of "transjudicialism" makes this act necessary. Transjudicialism is a new legal theory that encourages judges to disregard American law, including the United States Constitution, and base their decisions on foreign law. For example, Supreme Court justices recently used international law to justify upholding race-based college admissions and overturning all state sodomy laws.

In an October 28, 2003 speech before the Southern Center for International Studies in Atlanta, Georgia, Justice O'Connor stated: "[i]n ruling that consensual homosexual activity in one's home is constitutionally protected, the Supreme Court relied in part on a series of decisions from the European Court of Human Rights. I suspect that with time, we will rely increasingly on international and foreign law in resolving what now appear to be domestic issues, as we both appreciate more fully the ways in which domestic issues have an international dimension, and recognize the rich resources available to us in the decisions of foreign courts."

This statement should send chills down the back of every supporter of Constitutional government. After all, the legal systems of many of the foreign countries that provide Justice O'Connor with "rich resources" for her decisions do not respect the same concepts of due process, federalism, and even the presumption of innocence that are fundamental to the American legal system. Thus, harmonizing American law with foreign law could undermine individual rights and limited, decentralized government.

There has also been speculation that transjudicialism could be used to conform American law to treaties, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, that the Senate has not ratified. Mr. Speaker, some of these treaties have not been ratified because of concerns regarding their effects on traditional American legal, political, and social institutions. Judges should not be allowed to implement what could be major changes in American society, short-circuit the democratic process, and usurp the Constitutional role of the Senate to approve treaties, by using unratified treaties as the bases of their decisions.

All federal judges, including Supreme Court justices, take an oath to obey and uphold the Constitution. The Constitution was ordained and ratified by the people of the United States to provide a charter of governance in accord with fixed and enduring principles, not to empower federal judges to impose the transnational legal elites' latest theories on the American people.

Mr. Speaker, the drafters of the Constitution gave Congress the power to regulate the jurisdiction of federal courts precisely so we could intervene when the federal judiciary betrays its responsibility to uphold the Constitution and American law. Congress has a duty to use this power to ensure that judges base their decisions solely on American law.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to do their Constitutional duty to ensure that American citizens have American justice by cosponsoring the American Justice for American Citizens Act.

SENATOR BYRD CASTS HIS 17,000TH VOTE IN CONGRESS

HON. NICK J. RAHALL, II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, on January 8, 1959, ROBERT C. BYRD, my friend and mentor, cast his first vote in the U.S. House of Representative. Today, he cast his 17,000th vote in the U.S. Senate. I was with him on the Senate floor for this historic occasion.

This is a singular achievement. One that reveals not only the dedication of the Senior Senator from my home State of West Virginia, but also his willingness to put into action the words he so eloquently articulates on the floor on the U.S. Senate.

Though many will say, and I agree, that there is not a better speaker today than Senator BYRD, he is not a man of talk, he is a man of action, as this milestone indicates.

With each vote, Senator BYRD sets a new mark of public service achievement, but as Senator BYRD said himself, "It isn't necessarily the quantity of the votes that count. It is the quality of the vote."

And, if a Senator were to cast but a lone vote in a senatorial tenure as short as a moment, the words of ROBERT C. BYRD on the floor of the U.S. Senate will still ring out loudly, clearly, and forthrightly to generations with time, "(w)e are, at one and the same time, the sons of sires who sleep in calm assurance that we will not betray the trust that they confided to our hands; and the sires of sons who wait confident, in the beyond, that we will not cheat them of their birthright."

Indeed, we honor cherish and learn from those generations before us and we must always live, work, and strive on behalf of those generations yet unborn.

I agree with Senator BYRD. It is the quality of the vote, and I would also add another. With Senator BYRD, it is the quality of the man.

With his steadfast service to the people of West Virginia, and his dogged defense of the U.S. Constitution, Senator BYRD's quality shines through like the brightest of beacons on the darkest of nights.

They say that records are made to be broken, but I believe this record will never be broken, just as nothing will ever break Senator BYRD's spirit and his love for his State.

Senator BYRD continues to be my mentor and most importantly my friend, and I would like to offer my heart felt congratulations to Senator BYRD for this remarkable achievement.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CHRIS JOUFLAS

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today and pay tribute to Chris Joufflas of Grand Junction, Colorado, for his dedication to his community, state, and nation. Chris has spent his life as a sheep rancher in the mountains and valleys of Colorado and Utah, and has done much to better his Colorado community.

Chris' father immigrated to the United States in 1907, and was one of the first Greek immigrants to arrive on the Western Slope. He started the family ranching business in 1910, and it soon grew to thousands of acres for ranching and grazing in Colorado and Utah. Soon after marrying his wife Connie in 1953, Chris took over the family ranching business and successfully guided it until 1992. The family still owns a 2000-acre ranch near Wolcott, Colorado, where Chris' oldest daughter and family live, and Chris stays actively involved with the ranching community.

For anyone who has skied the beautiful slopes in Vail, Colorado, they probably have Chris, and the Greek liqueur Ouzo, to thank in part. In the 1960s, and then again in the 1970s, Chris sold parts of his sheep herding land to Vail Associates in deals brokered by Chris's favorite bargaining tool, Ouzo. These legendary deals allowed for some of Vail's most well known runs to be created, and a ski run has since been named after the Greek liqueur.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of satisfaction that I rise and pay tribute to Chris Joufflas before this body of Congress and this nation today. It is clear that he has spent his life dedicated to the Colorado ranching community and the State of Colorado. It is my pleasure to honor Chris here today, and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO CESAR CHAVEZ

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Cesar Chavez, a man who bravely fought against labor injustices and paved the way for the many rights enjoyed by this nation's workers.

Mr. Chavez grew up on the fruit and vegetable fields and learned first hand the plight of labor workers and the terrible conditions they endured.

Chavez rose from those fields and became the head of the United Farm Workers of America. When the UFW began their strikes in the 1960's in protest of the treatment of farm workers, Chavez led the successful cause with support from unions, church groups and students.

After the strikes were over, Chavez maintained the fight to ensure greater minority rights by fighting for greater educational and political opportunities.

One can not deny the great impact Chavez had on the millions of labor workers in this country. His bravery and determination proved that blue-collar workers are an invaluable part of the American economy.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE RELIEF ACT OF 2004

HON. MAX SANDLIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, the root causes of the crisis in our Nation's medical malpractice insurance system are numerous and complex. Unfortunately, while Congress debates the various approaches to reform, doctors, hospitals, and other healthcare providers face the harsh reality of skyrocketing premiums today.

Ensuring that Americans continue to have access to doctors of all specialties while Congress finds a comprehensive solution to this crisis is crucial. A temporary, but immediate malpractice premium tax credit would provide much-needed relief to healthcare providers who want to continue offering care, but are struggling to pay their malpractice premiums.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join today with 30 of my colleagues in introducing the Medical Malpractice Relief Act of 2004, which would allow doctors, hospitals and nursing homes to claim a tax credit for a percentage of the malpractice premiums they are paying and will pay during tax years 2004 and 2005.

Doctors who specialize in an area with increased risk of complications would be eligible for a tax credit equivalent to 20 percent of their total malpractice premium. The credit could be taken for premiums up to twice the average for a similarly situated doctor, i.e. same specialty and geographic area.

High-risk doctors include those in all surgical specialties and subspecialties, emergency medicine, obstetrics or anesthesiology; or who do interventional work that is reflected in their malpractice premiums.

Doctors who practice in lower risk specialties, such as general medicine, allergy, dermatology and pathology would be eligible for a tax credit equivalent to 10 percent of their total malpractice premium. The credit could be taken for premiums up to twice the average for a similarly situated doctor, i.e. same specialty and geographic area.

For-profit hospitals and nursing homes would be eligible for a tax credit equivalent to 15 percent of their total malpractice premium. The credit could be taken for premiums up to twice the average for a similarly situated hospital.

As many American hospitals and nursing homes are nonprofit institutions that do not pay taxes, this legislation would establish a 2-year grant program in the Health Resources Services Administration at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Nonprofit hospitals would be eligible for grants up to 15 percent of their malpractice premiums. The maximum allowable grant would be for premiums up to twice the average malpractice premium among similarly situated hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, medical providers across the country are facing a crisis, and they need our help now. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues in the People's House to act now to provide physicians, hospitals, and nursing homes the relief they need, so that they can turn their full attention to their genuine calling—caring for our Nation's health. I hope the House will take up this carefully targeted piece of legislation soon and provide our Nation's health care providers the relief they need.

RECOGNIZING RICHARD F. FURIA

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Richard F. Furia, the 2004 Man of the Year of the Ivy Ridge Lodge 251, Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, of the Order of Sons of Italy in America, for his dedication to the people of the greater Philadelphia area and for his work in the Italian-American community.

A resident of Lower Merion Township, Montgomery County, Rick Furia has practiced as an attorney in Southeastern Pennsylvania since 1971. He succeeded his father, the late U.S. Magistrate Edward W. Furia, Sr., into the profession and has served as a leader in many professional, fraternal and community organizations. Currently, he serves on the Philadelphia Bar Association's Board of Governors, Executive Board of Volunteers for the Indigent Program (VIP) and is Co-Chair of their Solo and Small Firm Committee. Rick is also a member of the Philadelphia Bar Foundation's Hamilton Circle, the charitable wing of the Association. He is an active member of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and American Trial Lawyers Associations and the American Bar Association. He is also a member of several other local organizations and institutions, including the Executive Board of the Lawyers Club of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Defense Institute, Russell Conwell Society of Temple University School of Law, the Amici Society—Center for Italian Studies of the University of Pennsylvania and the Opera Company of Philadelphia's Bravi Circle Advisory Board.

As a proud member of the Italian-American community, Mr. Furia has served on many committees and organizations to which he has so tirelessly volunteered time and support. He has not only played an active part in the rejuvenation of Ivy Ridge Lodge 251, but he has held national and state offices within the Order of Sons of Italy in America, including President of the Pennsylvania Commission for Social Justice (CSJ), the anti-defamation arm of the OSIA. The CSJ was founded to fight the stereotyping of Italian-Americans by the entertainment, advertising, and news industries. Rick is past Chancellor of the Justinian Society of Italian-American Lawyers and has served as a board member since 1984; and as board member of the Justinian Foundation since 1996. Additionally, with the Order of Sons of Italy in America, Rick served as National Orator, Chairman of the By-Law Committee, National Secretary for the Commission for Social Justice, and Ivy Ridge Orator for more than a decade. He is also a member of the National-Italian American Foundation, Counsel of 1000.

Richard Furia is an active member of the community in supporting the arts, education and culture. He is an active member of The Pennsylvania Society, Barnes Society of the Barnes Foundation, Free Library of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Union League. He was honored with the Millay Club Alumni Achiever Award from the Southeast Catholic/Bishop Neumann/Saint John Neumann High School Alumni Association in 2000.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Richard F. Furia for all his years of exemplary service to the Order of Sons of Italy in America, his community and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM "TOM"
WISEMAN

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to the life of William Thomas "Tom" Wiseman of Ignacio, Colorado; an extraordinary American who recently passed away at the age of seventy-three. Tom was an active member of the Ignacio community as the owner of Wiseman Hardware and Lumber Company, and was involved in numerous community organizations.

Tom graduated from Durango High School in 1948, and subsequently from Denver University in 1952. Upon returning to Ignacio, he joined his father at Wiseman Hardware and Lumber Company. In 1968, Tom purchased the hardware business from his father, which he operated until his retirement in 1992.

Tom generously gave his time and energy to his community, serving on the Ignacio Town Board, the Ignacio School Improvement Committee, and the Presbyterian Church Session. In addition, he was active with the La Plata County Republican Party, worked with the Ignacio Community Historical Society, and was a member of the Durango Masonic Lodge. Above all Tom loved spending time with his devoted family, including his wife Paula, whom he leaves behind.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise before this body of Congress and pay tribute to the life and memory of William Thomas Wiseman. He dedicated his life to his family and toward the betterment of his Ignacio community. My thoughts are with his loved ones during this difficult time of bereavement.

CELEBRATING CESAR CHAVEZ'S
BIRTHDAY: A CHAMPION FOR
WORKERS RIGHTS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Cesar Chavez's birthday. I would like to ask the members of the House to join in paying respect to a man who brought awareness of labor injustices perpetrated upon migrant workers to national light. Cesar Chavez worked tirelessly to improve the lives of America's farm workers by securing their rights to recognize and bargain collectively for fair working conditions. Chavez grew up in the fruit and vegetable fields and knew what it meant to work them from dawn to dusk. He knew the injustices that faced labor workers on a daily basis, and knew there had to be a change.

From those fields, Chavez rose to the head of the United Farm Workers of America, UFW, instilling in the UFW the principals of non-violence practiced by Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. When the UFW began striking in the 1960s, to protest the treatment of farm workers, the strikers took a pledge of non-violence, determined not to detract from the message of improved labor conditions. Chavez led a successful 5-year strike-boycott. Through this boycott, Chavez was able to forge a national support coalition of unions, church groups, students, minorities, and consumers. By the end of the boycott everyone knew the chant that unified all groups, "Sí se puede!"—yes we can. It was a chant of encouragement, pride and dignity.

Throughout his lifetime Mr. Chavez continued to speak out and helped communities to mobilize by assisting them with voter registration drives and insisting that minority communities had just as much a right to have equitable access to educational opportunities.

My constituents of the 15th Congressional District join millions of Americans in celebrating and recognizing Chavez's legacy on today his 70th birthday. This celebration should not be limited to today, it should continue and we, as members of Congress should ensure that in today's world, the rights of workers are still protected.

CARL LAMM, DISTINGUISHED
NORTH CAROLINIAN

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, Carl Edward Lamm—a legendary pioneer in radio broadcasting will be honored on April 20 at the 2004 Distinguished Citizen Banquet of the Johnston

Community College Foundation. Lamm is president and general manager of Radio Station WMPM in Smithfield, North Carolina.

Lamm, now in his 56th consecutive year as a full-time broadcaster, is sometimes referred to as the "Voice of Eastern Carolina." His many awards have included induction into the North Carolina Broadcasters Hall of Fame and the awarding of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, North Carolina's top citizen award, by Governor James B. Hunt. He is one of the finest examples of North Carolina values in action.

Lamm, born in Spring Hope, North Carolina, dreamed early on of a career in radio. As a 17-year-old, he did his first broadcasting on Radio Station WEED in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, took time out to join the Navy for World War II service, and returned in 1946 to finish high school. He then enrolled in the National Academy of Broadcasting in Washington, DC to pursue his dream of becoming a broadcaster. Within a year, he was hired at Radio Station WCEC in Rocky Mount. He followed that with a position at WCKB in Dunn, North Carolina. In 1958, he became a co-owner of and full-time broadcaster for WMPM in Smithfield, a career that continues to this day.

It has been a labor of love for his adopted community. A national expert on country music, Lamm has one of the most extensive collections of historic country music in the United States. His station is considered a leader in the presentation of old time country music, bluegrass, and southern gospel music. During his long career, he also emceed a program for Radio Station WSM in Nashville, TN, interviewing Hank Snow, a member of the County Music Hall of Fame.

On his Smithfield station, Lamm's interests have ranged far and wide. He was the 1971 Sportscenter of the Year for the Raleigh Hot Stove League. For 25 years, he hosted a program about North Carolina lawmakers, "Legislative Report to the People." He covered the Smithfield tobacco market for 54 years and from 1993 to 2000 was the sales supervisor of the market. Lamm has interviewed more than 500 major league baseball players and country music entertainers. Those interviews include Ted Williams, Joe DiMaggio, Yogi Berra, Casey Stengel, Mickey Mantle, and Whitey Ford. Interviews with entertainers have included Hank Williams, Red Foley, Ernest Tubbs, Roy Acuff, and Kitty Wells.

Lamm, is a former president of the Smithfield Rotary Club. He initiated the annual "Rotary Radio Day" in 1971 that continues to this day. That event, it is estimated, has raised more than \$100,000 for the Smithfield Rotary Club's community projects. The club honored him with one of its first Paul Harris Fellowship Awards. In 2003, the club established the Carl and Margie Lamm Scholarship, which will be awarded annually to a graduating senior at Smithfield-Selma High School.

Lamm was the first to broadcast the death of legendary Johnson County movie star, Ava Gardner, and was the natural voice to emcee the opening of the Ava Gardner Museum when it opened its new quarters in October, 2000.

Lamm taught a Sunday School Class at Beulah Baptist Church in Four Oaks for 48 consecutive years and now occasionally teaches the Evander Simpson Sunday School Class at First Baptist Church in Smithfield where he and his family are members.

Truly, Carl Lamm has been a unique man in a unique time in Johnson County. Through the radio, he has recorded the county's comings and goings, the births and deaths, the struggles and the triumphs, and the dreams of tomorrow.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
PEOPLE OF TAIWAN

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, with 80.2% of voters participating in Taiwan's recent Presidential election, I congratulate the country's 23 million citizens for once again demonstrating the strength and vibrancy of their democracy.

The very close margin of victory calls for a recount, and impassioned protests are not unfamiliar to voters in our own country who experienced the aftermath of the 2000 Presidential election. We know that protection of free expression and other personal freedoms are signs of a healthy democracy.

As Taiwan's democratic society has grown strong, its citizens have prospered. The transformation of Taiwan from an impoverished backwater into an industrial powerhouse, and from a one party dictatorship into a multiparty democracy is among the most impressive economic and political accomplishments of our time.

I send my congratulations to the people of Taiwan on the completion of their third direct presidential election.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF MRS.
FANNIE BELLE CALLAHAN

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, Mobile County, Alabama, and indeed the entire First Congressional District recently lost a dear friend, and I rise today to honor her and pay tribute to her memory.

Fannie Belle Callahan was a devoted mother, grandmother, and friend to the Mobile community throughout her entire life. At the time of her passing on March 15, 2004, she had devoted 94 years to the care of her children, her family, and her city.

Raised with her three siblings in the small community of Crichton, Alabama, Mrs. Callahan was required at an early age to go to work to help support her family following the death of her father. By the age of 17, she had already worked as a telephone operator, a cashier at Mobile's Saenger Theater, and a night clerk at the Battle House Hotel. Following her marriage to Herbert Callahan, she moved to East St. Louis, Illinois, but returned to Mobile three years later when he obtained a job with the GM&O Railroad.

Widowed at the time of her husband's death in 1950, Mrs. Callahan was once again required to go to work to support her large family of nine children. Although she retired in 1965 after many years of employment with the Mobile District Office of the U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers, she was not one to sit idly by and watch life go on in the world around her. She became actively involved in the political campaigns of her sons Sonny and George, and following Sonny's election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1984 volunteered her time as the receptionist in his Mobile district office. Mrs. Callahan quickly became the center of her son's office "family," and for the remainder of her life was always referred to affectionately as "Mom Callahan."

Throughout her 94 years, Fannie Belle Callahan taught many valuable lessons to her family and friends, and everyone who came in contact with her took away very fond memories of a charming southern lady who could make anyone to whom she was speaking feel they were the most important person at that time. In an article which appeared in the Mobile Register in 2000, Mrs. Callahan reflected on her long and rewarding life and spoke about how her years of hard work were rewarded with the successes her children enjoyed.

Many of her children were also interviewed and offered their perspectives on the lessons they had learned from the matriarch of a family made up of 94 men, women, and children. Perhaps her son, former Rep. Sonny Callahan, best summed up her long life and what she passed on to her children when he said, "She taught us responsibility. With nine kids, there had to be some degree of responsibility. She taught us to respect people and work hard."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a lovely woman who deeply loved, encouraged, and respected her many family and friends and the entire Mobile community. "Mom Callahan" will be deeply missed by her family—her sons, Sonny Callahan, George Callahan, Charles Callahan, and Terrance Callahan; her daughters, Patsy Dempster, Madeline Martin, Margaret Ann Athey, Mary Jane Emick, and Rose Callahan; and her 32 grandchildren, 56 great-grandchildren, and 13 great-great-grandchildren—as well as the countless friends she leaves behind. Our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this difficult time.

A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE TO
REQUIRE A SIMPLIFICATION
TITLE IN ANY TAX MEASURE

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution to amend the rules of the House regarding legislative measures changing our tax laws. The proposed change would prevent the consideration of any tax measure unless it contained a title simplifying the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

We are at a state where, I believe, tax simplification should be a top priority of our legislative efforts. In a word, the Code is a mess. The current size amounts to an incredible 9,490 pages. The Code has become too complex. Over the years it has become a destination for provisions that may be admirable, but should belong elsewhere. The inclusion of these provisions in the Code puts an extra burden on the Internal Revenue Service—one

that it may not be particularly adept at handling. Many tax provisions simply are mind-numbing in their detail and burdensome in their compliance requirements. It is not a simple task, for more than a few citizens do their own returns. The tax preparation service has ballooned. Many are either disinclined or unable to deal with the tax process.

As you know, I'm not a tax lawyer. I'm merely an old glass man from Corning, New York. In talking to a member of the Ways and Means tax staff on April 15th several years ago, he told me he had just dropped his tax return in the mail, and was clearly sweating bullets. "I just hope I got it right," he said. Strange. Here was a bright young tax lawyer—a government employee with what I would have guessed was a fairly straightforward tax return: deductions for mortgage interest, charitable contributions, and student loan interest. Even so, he was worried whether he had filled out his return correctly. My reaction at the time was: "If he's nervous, what about the rest of us?"

Until we overhaul the system in a major way, whether that be a flat tax, VAT or some other approach, we should make it a priority to attack the present Code, reduce the complexity, and make it simpler for as many citizens as possible.

In recent years, I have introduced several tax simplification proposals (the current bill is H.R. 22) covering a variety of areas. We are currently reviewing those proposals to refine them, and then will reintroduce some of the proposals as stand-alone bills to focus better on the specific issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, in order to call attention to the simplification issue, the resolution I am introducing, as stated above, would require that tax legislation include a tax title in any tax measure for it to be considered by the House. The purpose is to focus attention on simplification each and every time we consider a tax measure, with the result that we accomplish some measure of simplification to the Internal Revenue Code.

I urge your support of this measure. It cannot hurt. It may just help in ways we are unable now to contemplate.

BRING CHARLES TAYLOR BEFORE
THE SPECIAL COURT IN SIERRA
LEONE

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with our colleagues a letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell that 28 members of Congress have signed asking that the United States act swiftly to ensure that Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia and now a fugitive from justice, is held accountable for his heinous crimes and brought before the Special Court for Sierra Leone. There should be no safe harbor for tyrants like Charles Taylor.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 1, 2004.

Hon. COLIN POWELL,
Secretary of State,
Washington DC.

DEAR SECRETARY POWELL: We are writing to express deep concern that Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia and now a fugitive from justice, has not been brought before the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Charles Taylor faces 17 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and violations of international humanitarian law. Charles Taylor's time is up. We are asking that you make a concerted effort to see that he is brought before the Special Court.

The despotic rule of Charles Taylor in Sierra Leone, while president of Liberia, represents his tyrannical influence in fueling Sierra Leone's ten-year civil war. He is accused of providing financial support, military training, and other support and encouragement to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to destabilize Sierra Leone in order to gain access to her diamond wealth.

Charles Taylor also organized and ordered widespread and systematic attacks to terrorize the civilian population in Sierra Leone. Disturbing examples include abductions, sexual slavery of women, and children, large scale physical violence and unlawful killings, notably hacking off of limbs, facial and bodily mutilations, body carvings, gang rapes, and hacking and burning to death those whom he felt did not sufficiently support the RUF.

As you know, the three-year mandate of the Special Court for Sierra Leone expires June 30, 2005. Since its inception, the Special Court has been collecting and analyzing evidence against Charles Taylor. Just last week, the Special Court courthouse officially opened its doors.

Time is of the essence. Charles Taylor needs to be brought to justice before the three-year mandate expires. It is intolerable that Charles Taylor is living with impunity in the lap of luxury in Nigeria, with just about anything he needs at his disposal, including a cell phone. There is growing evidence that Charles Taylor continues to meddle in the political affairs of Liberia. He has expressed a desire to return to Liberia. We must not be blind to the fact that he has not lost his thirst for the political power he once had before his exile.

We have no doubt that you find Charles Taylor's brutal cycle of violence as abhorrent as we do. We urge you to act swiftly to ensure that Charles Taylor is held accountable for his actions. There should be no safe harbor for tyrants like Charles Taylor. We must act now.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf; Edward R. Royce; Joe Baca; Howard L. Berman; Robert A. Brady; John A. Culberson; Peter A. DeFazio; Jim DeMint; Vernon J. Ehlers; Lane Evans; Sam Farr; Trent Franks; Virgil H. Goode, Jr.; Michael M. Honda.

Patrick J. Kennedy; James R. Langevin; James P. McGovern; Bobby L. Rush; John Shimkus; Christopher H. Smith; Vic Snyder; Thomas G. Tancredo; Ellen O. Tauscher; Patrick J. Tiberi; James T. Walsh; Jerry Weller; Curt Weldon; Albert R. Wynn.

TRIBUTE TO VELMA M. WEBBER BOUCHARD ON HER INDUCTION INTO THE UPPER PENINSULA LABOR HALL OF FAME

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the achievements of Velma M. Webber Bouchard, who will be honored for her service to the cause of American working men and women with induction into the Upper Peninsula Labor Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Marquette, Michigan on April 17th.

Velma, who grew up in Luce County, began her outstanding service to workers of the U.P. and the Democratic Party in 1975. That was the year when she started her job at the Newberry Board of Water and Light and joined Local 2530, Council 55 (now Council 25) of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

Her service in AFSCME includes a long list of leadership positions. She served as Local President for two years; Secretary-Treasurer for four years; Recording Secretary for three years; Delegate to the Eastern U.P. Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO for seven years and Vice-Chair of the U.P. AFSCME Political Action Committee.

Velma also traveled extensively through the region teaching Labor History and representation skills to AFSCME members. She served her local union in AFSCME Council level governance functions, periodically serving as a delegate from her local to the Council 55, 11 and 25 Annual Conventions, as well as being a delegate to the Michigan State AFL-CIO Conventions.

As a trade union leader, Velma spent time working to make her union even more effective by serving on the U.P. AFSCME Community Services Committee and by serving on the Union Women/Minorities Leadership Training Program Board during the 1980s.

Beyond her union, Velma's involvement in political activities is also a reflection of her nonstop efforts to protect and represent Michigan workers. Since 1988, she has served as Chair of the Luce County Democratic Party and served as its Vice-Chair before then. Velma has also been an Officer-At-Large of the Michigan Democratic Party for four years; was elected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1992; and has served as an alternate delegate to the Michigan Democratic State Central Committee. During the Blanchard Administration, Governor Blanchard called upon Velma to take several appointments, including the Controlled Substance Advisory Committee and the International Trade Board.

Despite all of the time devoted to organized labor and politics, Velma still found time for civic duty. She is a lifetime member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 74, serving as its President and District President. She has served as a member of the Michigan Selective Service Board No. 17 since 1985.

Velma retired from the Newberry Board of Water and Light in 1993 after 18 years. We cannot thank her enough for her endless energy and dedication fighting for the rights of Michigan workers.

I also want to acknowledge Joe King, Velma's good friend of many years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my House colleagues to join me in acknowledging Velma Webber Bouchard's lifetime of contributions to organized labor and her community, and in celebrating the accomplishments that have earned her the distinction of becoming an honored member of the Upper Peninsula Labor Hall of Fame.

THANKING JAMES JOYCE OF CHICAGO

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank outgoing Chicago Fire Commissioner James Joyce for his 39 years of noble service to the department and to wish him well in his retirement.

Commissioner Joyce enjoyed a remarkable rise through the ranks of the Chicago Fire Department before being appointed to the top post by Mayor Richard M. Daley in 1999. During his more than four years as commissioner, Commissioner Joyce spearheaded important changes to the department, including building new firehouses, replacing and updating firehouse equipment, and improving coordination with suburban fire departments. His tenure as Commissioner was also noteworthy for the respect he garnered from rank and file firefighters throughout the department.

His steady leadership also was apparent after the Sept. 11 attacks, when Commissioner Joyce committed the department to aiding disaster prevention efforts and oversaw changes in policies and procedures to protect the people of Chicago.

Commissioner Joyce was born in 1942 and was educated at Chicago State University. He received his master's degree in public administration from Governor's State University.

Commissioner Joyce began his career within the Chicago Fire Department as a firefighter assigned to Truck 4 in Chinatown in 1965. After serving as engineer, lieutenant and captain he was promoted to battalion chief in 1979. Later his administrative posts included District Chief and Deputy Fire Commissioner.

The Joyce family's commitment to firefighting and to protecting the lives of Chicago's citizens began long before the Commissioner joined the force. Commissioner Joyce is a third-generation Chicago firefighter, whose maternal grandfather, father and brother all served. His grandfather gave the ultimate sacrifice, dying as a result of battling a 1934 blaze at the old Chicago Stockyards.

Commissioner Joyce and his wife Janet reside in St. John Fisher Parish on Chicago's South Side and are the parents of four children. I wish Commissioner Joyce the best as he begins his well-deserved retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I join in all of Chicago in thanking James Joyce for his long record of achievement in serving our city. His dedication and passion will be missed.

TRIBUTE TO TOM CATLETT

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, our county courts are a key component of the example America sets for the rest of the world; but it is only as admirable as the men and women who serve within it. I am honored to rise today to pay tribute to a proud servant of the Monroe County Court, Tom Catlett, for the positive mark he has left on Monroe County and the courthouse he has dedicated his life to serving.

Mr. Catlett has served Monroe County for nearly 40 years, making him the longest serving county judge in Arkansas. Unfortunately for us, he has recently announced his intent to retire at the end of this year. This will end a journey which began on July 26, 1966 when Judge Catlett won the Democratic primary and was sworn in later the same year—he was 40 years old.

Since then, Judge Catlett has served 19 terms as county judge and has always called Monroe County home. He has shown the courthouse unmatched respect, specifically through a major renovation which raised the standard for beautifying county courthouses in Arkansas and across this country. It cannot be debated: Tom Catlett was a citizen who worked tirelessly for the growth and prosperity of Monroe County.

Perhaps his service is best summarized by a statement he recently made when he announced his retirement, "I am sure that when I look back on my life, I will see the last 38 years as the happiest times of all." Judge Catlett is a man who took pride in his work and is honored to be in a position to help his county excel. Judge Catlett's thirst for improving his community remains unquenched and I expect even after his retirement this year, the name Tom Catlett will permeate the accomplishments of Monroe County for years to come.

On behalf of the Congress, I extend the utmost respect and deference for a man befitting such titles as county judge, community leader and example to us all. Tom Catlett is a roll model and I am honored to recognize him in this Congress.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE COMMUNITY OF STOCKTON, MISSOURI

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to recognize the citizens of Stockton, Missouri, for their efforts in recovering from a tragedy. On the evening of Sunday, May 4, 2003, this small Missouri community was struck by a powerful tornado. It has taken months to restore what took minutes to destroy, but this community has shown strength and resolve in the face of great challenges.

The utter destruction visited upon Stockton is difficult to grasp unless seen. It is measured in terms of what is no longer there. The absence of businesses, homes, churches, even 100 year-old trees, act as a daily reminder of what happened. The Stockton town square was particularly hard hit. Like most town squares in small communities throughout Missouri, Stockton's was an important center of economic activity. Most of the buildings leveled in the downtown area were businesses. The local business owners took it upon themselves to form the Downtown Business District Committee. This committee, open to all business-owners, created a means of mutual support and a forum for discussion of common problems and issues. One important task was to set up guidelines for reconstruction of the town square. The first building on the square to reopen was the pharmacy of Ray Zumwalt. The rebuilding of the pharmacy, along with all

of the other buildings in Stockton, did not happen overnight. It was a gradual process. But as bricks were laid and roofs repaired, the mending of the spirit of this town could be seen, not just in the buildings, but in the people as well. The return of hope to a community that has lost so much is a very important thing.

Today, the community of Stockton is busy preparing for a four-day event commemorating the one-year anniversary of the tornado. This event will serve as a reminder of that day, and as a celebration of all that has been accomplished in such a short period of time. Some questioned whether the town could survive. With this city-wide event, scheduled to take place May 1 through May 4, the people of Stockton will answer with a resounding "yes".

The following individuals deserve special recognition for their efforts to help the people of Stockton: Jerry Uhlmann, Charles May, Gayla Weber, Dick Hainje, Dennis Moffett, Dan Best, Brad Gair, Jonathan Hoyes, Fred May, Jeff Wall, Peggy Kenney, R. Bruce Martin, Kristi Perrin, Richard Barnes, Sheila Johnson, Cynthia Davies and Gale Roberts. These individuals from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Natural Resources provided direction and support in the community's efforts to rebuild.

Mr. Speaker, there are days such as the May 4, 2003, when we are reminded of the awesome and unforgiving power of nature. In minutes, lives, families, and whole communities can be uprooted. The people of Stockton made the decision to rebuild, not retreat. It takes strength and courage to face the challenges posed by such a disaster. They have faced this time of trying with such great resolve, have overcome setbacks with such perseverance, they serve as an example to us all of what can be accomplished when the people of a community based on strong traditions of support, compassion, and dedication come together to help their neighbors. Stockton has a lesson to teach us all: the values of family, community, and helping those in need are still alive and well in this country. I am sure my fellow Members will join me in honoring the citizens of this outstanding community and thanking those who have done so much to help.

COMMENDING MIKE PACINI

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mike Pacini. Mike Pacini is currently a Boulder City Council Member and has sat on the council since 1997, when he was the youngest candidate elected to that position. In 2003 Mike Pacini was elected President of the Nevada League of Cities and received the Honor of Nevada's 2003-2004 Public Official of the Year. I urge the House to join with me in congratulating him on his recent honors.

CONGRATULATING PETTY OFFICER THIRD CLASS DAVID L. BROWN, UNITED STATES NAVY, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RECEIPT OF THE PURPLE HEART

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise to pay tribute to Petty Officer Third Class David L. Brown, former member of the United States Navy, on the occasion of his receipt of the Purple Heart.

This recognition—long overdue—was made last week as the result of injuries Petty Officer Brown received during the Vietnam Conflict in 1968.

On January 3, 1968, Petty Officer Brown, who served as an equipment operator in country for a total of 13 months, and his unit were involved in action with enemy combatants near Hue City during the Tet Offensive. During the engagement, a lieutenant positioned nearby was wounded by enemy fire. Petty Officer Brown rushed to his aid and while trying to drag this officer out of the line of fire to safety, he was hit in his hands by an enemy mortar round. He immediately received aid from a corpsman, but he and his unit continued to be pinned down by enemy fire for eight days. Petty Officer Brown was eventually evacuated from Hue City and continued his naval service, serving for a period of ten months aboard the *USS Ranger*.

Following his return to the United States, he served as a ship superintendent at Northrop Grumman Ship Systems' Ingalls Operation in Pascagoula, Mississippi, until his retirement. However, he never received the recognition he was due as a result of heroic services rendered during the Tet Offensive.

In an effort to determine his eligibility for the Purple Heart and other medals and decorations associated with the injuries he sustained in Hue City, Petty Officer Brown contacted my predecessor, former Congressman Sonny Calahan, and requested his assistance in contacting the appropriate officials on his behalf.

Over the next two years, Mrs. Kay Williams, a member of Congressman Callahan's district staff and now a member of my district staff, worked diligently with officials with the National Personnel Records Center, the Department of the Navy, and the National Archives and Records Administration on this issue.

Without question, Mrs. Williams tirelessly pursued every possible avenue in an attempt to secure this recognition for Petty Officer Brown, and in recent weeks was able to contact Mr. Glenn Morichika. Mr. Morichika, a resident of Honolulu, Hawaii, is the only surviving witness to the events of January 3, 1968. Thankfully, Mr. Morichika was able to provide an eyewitness testimony as to Petty Officer Brown's actions.

As a result of this testimony, and the tremendous efforts of Mrs. Williams, Petty Officer Brown was finally awarded the Purple Heart, the Combat Action Ribbon, and the Meritorious Unit Commendation. This recognition, while long overdue, is certainly well-deserved and is a testament to the dedication to duty and concern for his fellow troops that marked Petty Officer Brown's exemplary service in the United States Navy.

Mr. Speaker, sadly far too many veterans returned home from Vietnam without the recognition they were due. Unfortunately, in Petty Officer Brown's case, he not only demonstrated his willingness to fight for his country, but he returned home only to fight the bureaucracy of his country to get that to which he was always entitled. This is a sad but often-repeated story that thousands of veterans know all-too-well.

Fortunately, in this particular instance, there was a happy ending to this story. Therefore, today, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join with me in recognizing David L. Brown for this accomplishment and for his many years of devoted service to his country. I know I join with his many family and friends in congratulating him on this achievement and in extending our heartfelt thanks for his outstanding service to the United States of America.

INTRODUCTION OF TAX SIMPLIFICATION LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a package of nine separate proposals on tax simplification. Also, today I introduced a resolution of the House to require a simplification title in any tax measure under consideration.

As we approach the deadline of April 15, taxpayers once again come face-to-face with the task of voluntarily—and I emphasize voluntarily—complying with filing their individual tax returns. If our system becomes too complex for the ordinary citizen, then noncompliance will no doubt accelerate. Many Members, and taxpayers, believe that Congress will overhaul the entire system. I'm all for overhauling the tax system, but it will be a long process. In the meantime, I believe the ongoing simplification of the tax system should be a top priority of Congress.

This package of simplification bills highlights some of the areas of the Internal Revenue Code that cry out for change in order to reduce complexity and make our citizens' task of voluntarily complying with our tax laws a less daunting challenge. Some have a cost attached, such as the AMT repeal, while others are revenue neutral. The proposals are as follows:

Alternative Minimum Tax Repeal Act of 2004. The repeal of AMT for individuals is at the top of about everybody's list of must-do tax legislation. However, the revenue lost is substantial. The bill would substantially slow the growth in the number of taxpayers subject to AMT over the next 10 years, by adjusting the AMT exemption, and finally repealing the provision effective after 2013.

Child Definition Simplification Act of 2004. The proposal would address a challenging problem that faces taxpayers every year—the multiple definitions of a qualifying child for different tax purposes. The proposal would provide a uniform definition of a child based on residence, relationship and age of the child.

Filing Status Simplification Act of 2004. The Head of Household filing status has long been

a leading source of taxpayer confusion and mistakes during the filing season. To address this problem, the proposal would change "Head of Household" to "Single Parent or Guardian" filing status, a term that is less likely to cause a mistake in filing status.

Home Mortgage Tax Simplification Act of 2004. Under the proposal, points paid on a home mortgaging refinancing would be fully deductible in the year in which the expense is incurred. The current law generally requires that the refinancing points be amortized over the stated life of the loan.

Taxation of Minor Children Simplification Act of 2004. The proposal would eliminate the current restrictions on adding a minor child's income to the parent's return. A parent could freely elect to include the income of a child under 14 on his or her own tax return. This does not change the ability of the child to file a separate return, if that is preferable.

Education Tax Credit Simplification Act of 2004. The proposal would merge the HOPE and Lifetime Learning Credits, which serve nearly identical purposes but have different rules. The proposal would provide a credit for one-half of the first \$3,000 of post-secondary education expenses. The credit would apply on a per-child basis and would not be limited to the first two years of post-secondary education.

Small Business Tax Modernization Act of 2004. The proposal would combine the benefits of Subchapter S (S corporations) and Subchapter K (Partnerships) of the Internal Revenue Code in a single, unified passthrough entity regime based on Subchapter K. There are presently two separate, fully-articulated passthrough entity regimes—an expensive and unnecessarily complicated system. The goal of the legislation is to establish a single passthrough entity regime that preserves the major benefits of Subchapters S and K.

Personal Holding Company Tax Repeal Act of 2004. The proposal would repeal the Personal Holding Company tax, which is outdated and has been eclipsed by subsequent changes to the tax code.

Small Business Law Tax Conformity Act of 2004. The proposal would make technical changes necessary to update the Internal Revenue Code to take into account changes that have occurred in state business law. The proposal would define earnings from selfemployment to exclude the portion of a partner's distributive share that is attributable to capital.

If these simplification proposals—which affect millions of taxpayers—are enacted this year, filing tax returns next year will be simpler and less time consuming. I urge my colleagues to support these provisions.

STOP THE KILLING IN SUDAN

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, Raphaél Lemkin in his book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* coined the word "genocide." Greek word "genos" (race), Latin word "cide" (killing). Genocide means "the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial, political, or cultural group."

It has been said the way we behave is really an indicator of what we truly believe, and

belief drives behavior. It will be 59 years this April that Dietrich Bonhoeffer was marched from his prison cell at the Flossenburg concentration camp in Germany and was hung. Bonhoeffer was a Protestant minister who opposed Hitler. He refused to keep silent about the discrimination and persecution of Jews. He spoke out repeatedly and fearlessly until the Nazis executed him.

"Never again"—words that were uttered, beliefs that were expressed by many in the West after the full-scale horror of the Holocaust became known. And yet, genocide has happened again and again this century, while world leaders and governments have been slow or hesitant to respond.

This is the theme of the excellent book on genocide in the 20th century—*A Problem from Hell*, by Harvard University instructor Samantha Power. More than ever, Ms. Power's book reminds all of us, especially those in public service, of the unique power and responsibility of our voice in confronting evil and our moral responsibility to speak out.

Is genocide happening again? As the world waits and watches, the people of the Darfur region in Sudan are being wiped out. This crisis began in February 2003 when two rebel groups in Darfur state began to fight government security forces. In early February 2004, the government launched a major military offensive against the rebel forces. The result has been brutal attacks by ground and air forces against innocent civilians and undefended villages. Thousands have been killed. Millions more remain beyond the reach of aid.

The United Nations resident coordinator to Sudan recently described the situation in Darfur as the world's greatest humanitarian crisis and possibly its greatest humanitarian catastrophe. Richard S. Williamson, the U.S. representative to the Commission on Human Rights, said on March 25: "the U.S. views with grave concern the deepening crisis in the Darfur region of western Sudan. A lack of civil order and the refusal of local as well as national authorities to permit unrestricted access for humanitarian workers have put as many as one million people at imminent risk of life and livelihood."

Below is the text of H. Con. Res. 403, a sense of Congress resolution I introduced April 1, condemning the Government of the Republic of the Sudan for its reported involvement in the attacks against innocent civilians and calls on the president to direct the United States representative to the United Nations to seek an official investigation by the UN to determine if crimes against humanity have been committed. I fear it is happening again and it is only going to get worse.

I urge the House to pass this resolution and go on the record to speak out against what is happening in Darfur.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 403

Whereas, since early 2003 a conflict between forces of the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and rebel forces in the impoverished Darfur region of western Sudan has resulted in attacks by Sudanese Government ground and air forces against innocent civilians and undefended villages in the region;

Whereas, Sudanese Government forces have also engaged in the use of rape as a weapon of war, the abduction of children, the destruction of food and water sources, and the deliberate and systematic manipulation

and denial of humanitarian assistance for the people of the Darfur region;

Whereas, United Nations officials and non-governmental organizations have indicated that the humanitarian situation in the Darfur region is extremely urgent, particularly in light of restrictions by the Government of Sudan on the delivery of humanitarian assistance for the people of the region;

Whereas, on December 18, 2003, United Nations Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Egeland, declared that the Darfur region was probably "the world's worst humanitarian catastrophe";

Whereas, on February 17, 2004, Amnesty International reported that the organization "continues to receive details of horrifying attacks against civilians in villages by government warplanes, soldiers and pro-government militia";

Whereas, on February 18, 2004, United Nations Special Envoy for Humanitarian Affairs in Sudan, Tom Eric Vraalsen, declared following a trip to the Darfur region that "aid workers are unable to reach the vast majority [of the displaced]";

Whereas, Doctors Without Borders, the Nobel Peace Prizewinning medical humanitarian relief organization and one of the few aid groups on the ground in the Darfur region, reported that the region is the scene of "catastrophic mortality rates"; and

Whereas, nearly 3,000,000 people affected by the conflict in the Darfur region have remained beyond the reach of aid agencies trying to provide essential humanitarian assistance and United Nations aid agencies estimate that they have been able to reach only 15 percent of people in need and that more than 700,000 people have been internally displaced in the past year; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring: That Congress—

(1) strongly condemns the Government of the Republic of the Sudan for its attacks against innocent civilians in the impoverished Darfur region of western Sudan and demands that the Government of Sudan immediately cease these attacks;

(2) calls on the international community to strongly condemn the Government of Sudan for these attacks and to demand that they cease;

(3) urges the Government of Sudan to allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance for the people in the Darfur region; and

(4) urges the President to direct the United States representative to the United Nations to seek an official investigation by the United Nations to determine if crimes against humanity have been committed by the Government of Sudan in the Darfur region.

TRIBUTE TO JON G. "JACK" LA-SALLE ON HIS INDUCTION INTO THE UPPER PENINSULA LABOR HALL OF FAME

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the lifetime of achievements of my long-time friend Jon G. "Jack" LaSalle, who will be inducted into the Upper Peninsula Labor Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Marquette, Michigan on April 17th, 2004. Jack's decades of service to further the best interests of Michigan workers have more than earned him this great honor.

A native of Nahma Michigan, Jack is a 1971 graduate of Northern Michigan University. In June of that year, Jack began his apprenticeship as an Ironworker and became indentured and an apprentice member of Local 783, International Association of Bridge, Structural, Reinforcing and Ornamental Iron Workers, AFL-CIO. In 1975, he graduated from Apprentice School and became a Journeyman Iron Worker.

In 1973, with his local and International Union's support, Jack studied Industrial Relations at the University of Minnesota. During that time, Jack was the first and only apprentice of Local 783 to serve the local union as a member of the Bargaining Committee. After returning to the U.P. in 1974, Jack worked his trade until taking a Staff Representative position in 1975 with Council 55 (now Council 25), of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). In 1978, Jack took a position with the Michigan State AFL-CIO's Labor Employment and Development Program servicing the U.P. During his time at the state AFL-CIO, Jack took the lead in organizing the Eastern U.P. Central Labor Council and the Dickinson-Iron Counties Central Labor Council.

Jack was elected to office in the Marquette County Labor Council, AFL-CIO as Financial Secretary-Treasurer in 1976 and served for several terms. He also served seven years as President of the Labor Council and is currently its Recording Secretary.

Since the mid-1970's, Jack has also been very active in politics and worked on many campaigns, including being elected as a Morris Udall delegate to the 1976 Democratic National Convention and serving several terms on the Michigan Democratic Party's State Central Committee. He served 4 years as Chair of the 11th District Democratic Party and 3 years as Officer-At-Large of the Michigan Democratic Party. He also served as the Marquette County Field Coordinator for the Blanchard for Governor Campaign in 1982. Jack has been the Chair of the Marquette County Democratic Party since 2001.

Jack and Jeanne LaSalle have been active in every political campaign for the past 30 years. I am pleased and honored to have earned the support of the LaSalle's in my own congressional campaigns.

In 1983, Jack was appointed by Governor James Blanchard to serve as Deputy Director of the newly opened Governor's Office for Job Training. In 1987, he was again appointed by Governor Blanchard to the Mackinac Bridge Authority and later became its Vice-Chair, serving on the Authority until 1994. Jack was also a State Board of Education appointee to the Michigan Occupational Information System (MOIS) Advisory Board in 1978, where he served for 13 years and as Chair for five years.

Instead of taking a much deserved break, Jack is currently serving his 19th year as a Field Representative for the Michigan State Building and Construction Trades Council, representing the U.P. and the Northern Lower Peninsula. In addition to being an active member of Ironworkers Local 8, Jack maintains memberships with the Industrial Workers of the World, the American Civil Liberties Union (since 1981) and many other political and progressive organizations championing the cause of workers.

I also want to recognize Jack's wife and partner, Jeanne, and all her sacrifice that al-

lowed Jack to serve so many workers over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my House colleagues to join me in acknowledging Jack LaSalle's lifetime of contributions to organized labor and his community, and in celebrating the accomplishments that have earned him the distinction of becoming an honored member of the Upper Peninsula Labor Hall of Fame.

CONGRATULATING WINONA ONGEMACH OF CHICAGO

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my warmest birthday wishes to Mrs. Winona Ongemach of Chicago on the occasion of her 100th birthday on April 3.

Born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa as one of ten children, Mrs. Ongemach has lived in Chicago for the past 80 years. She has been an active and influential member of the Ravenswood community, faithfully attending Ravenswood Fellowship United Methodist Church for 60 years.

At a time in her life when many might expect her to slow down, Mrs. Ongemach remains a fixture at her church. She brings smiles to the faces of churchgoers by running pancake breakfasts, collecting soup can labels, and leaning on members who have missed Sunday church.

Mrs. Ongemach has brought her same spirit of community involvement to the Bethany Retirement Community, where she currently resides. There she reads novels, organizes monthly card parties and teaches residents card games.

Mrs. Ongemach was married in 1928 to her late husband, Rudolf. She worked for many years at Time, Inc. where she operated one of the first ever IBM computers. She also spent 27 years volunteering at Ravenswood Hospital where she knitted hats for newborn babies. An avid bowler, she participated in the Time, Inc. bowling league until she turned 90. Mrs. Ongemach also loves to travel and has visited many different islands on cruise ships.

I hope Mrs. Ongemach's many friends and acquaintances will use this milestone birthday as an opportunity to celebrate her life, her friendship and all she has meant to her community.

Mr. Speaker, I join with the residents of the Ravenswood community and the members of the Ravenswood Fellowship United Methodist Church in congratulating Mrs. Winona Ongemach on her 100th birthday. She has truly made a difference in her community and her life serves as a model that we should all strive to emulate.

TRIBUTE TO DONALD DUNN

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an American hero. Donald Dunn, chief

of Engineering and Construction Division with the Army Corps of Engineer in Little Rock, is currently in Iraq where he is helping bring oil production systems back online for the people of Iraq.

Mr. Dunn is currently serving as the Deputy for Program Management for Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil (RIO). Established in May 2003, RIO was staffed with personnel originally targeted for other positions in engineering and most had little or no background as project managers. Mr. Dunn is responsible for establishing, training and leading the Programs and Project Management team and developing a group of motivated men and women who are now getting the job done.

His dedication to this task, attention to the training and developmental needs of his staff, and his leadership have been exceptional. In addition, he gave considerable time and attention to locating and selecting the replacement program and project management personnel for future rotations.

Further, Mr. Dunn displayed ample flexibility and imagination when he retooled his staff to respond to unforeseen challenges, such as the requirement to provide approximately 400 megawatts of stand-alone power to critical oil infrastructure locations throughout Iraq. He worked tirelessly to build and improve vital relationships with contractor partners including the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Perhaps most significantly, Mr. Dunn has nurtured new relationships with Iraqi Ministry of Oil officials and local oil and gas company engineers and technicians. He has helped the people of Iraq in all his endeavors and contributed significantly to our ability to build lasting and effective relationships in the Middle East.

Recently, Mr. Dunn won an award from the Federal Executive Association for his hard work and dedication to service. His response was, "I believe that no one exists in a vacuum, and that it takes the contributions of everyone to have a successful team." On behalf of the Congress, I commend Mr. Dunn for his commitment, for his intelligence and for his unwavering dedication to seeing our efforts in Iraq end in success.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE STOCKTON LADY TIGERS

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to congratulate the Stockton Lady Tigers basketball team. For the third time in 4 years, the Lady Tigers have taken state championship honors in their division.

The Lady Tigers won their first state championship 4 years ago when the current seniors were freshmen. The team has returned to the Missouri State High School Activities Association final four in Columbia, Missouri, every year since.

This year's championship game was particularly meaningful. It was the last time the team's seniors would play together. It also marked the end to an outstanding season in which the team lost only one game in a particularly challenging schedule. The team exceeded all expectations; a challenge not easily met when there is such a history of success.

Mr. Speaker, the Stockton Lady Tigers basketball team has proven itself to be worthy state champions. The young women have offered excitement and pride to the fans in their community and have earned respect and garnered praise from their opponents. I am sure my fellow Members will join me in congratulating them on their outstanding accomplishments and wish them continued success.

HONORING BILL FERRENCE

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great pleasure to pay tribute to Bill Ferrence as he celebrates his 30th Anniversary as manager of Boulder Dam Credit Union in Boulder City, Nevada. Bill came to Boulder City in 1974 and has been contributing to his local community ever since. When Bill first started at the Credit Union in 1974, he saw a challenge and tackled it. Using his ingenuity and his true belief in the "Golden Rule," he was able to turn the small 3,000 member Credit Union into a thriving 20,000 member Credit Union with almost 90 percent of all residents located within the Boulder City limits holding a membership. He treats his customers and employees like he does his family; in fact, many of those that live and work with him consider him to be a member of their family.

I applaud him in his example to others of what hard work and dedication can achieve. He is an example to all as he has demonstrated that it requires caring and a desire to better oneself and one's surroundings to achieve true successes in life.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Bill Ferrence in his dedication and efforts. I wish him another thirty years of successes in his life and career and congratulate him on his wonderful achievements and dedication to the Boulder City residents and his example to fellow Nevadans.

REMEMBERING AND HONORING PFC SEAN SCHNEIDER OF JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, this week our nation lost a man of honor, courage and kindness. Private First Class Sean Schneider was killed in Iraq on Monday when a bomb hit his convoy.

Sean grew up in Janesville, Wisconsin, and graduated from Craig High School—the same school I graduated from. Sean liked to hunt, canoe, and tinker with cars and motorcycles. His high school teachers talk about what a caring individual he was and how he was the kind of student you respected. At the same time, he was an independent young man who knew what he wanted to do with his life.

Sean joined the Army in 2002 with a strong desire to serve and protect his country. In doing so, he made that incredible commitment that our military men and women and our vet-

erans throughout history have made: he was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice and put his life on the line to preserve our rights and freedoms.

It is because of Sean and people like him that our country remains free today. America owes him and his family a tremendous debt that can never be repaid. What we must do is commit to always remembering his life and the sacrifice he made on our behalf. And we must be grateful for every one of our veterans who has stood up, like Sean did, for our country and the cause of freedom.

Sean Schneider led an inspiring life and touched so many people's lives along the way. Our thoughts and prayers are with his many loved ones—especially his wife, his parents and his siblings—during this most difficult of times.

A TRIBUTE TO EMIL MARZULLO, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY DI- RECTOR OF SPECIAL DISTRICTS

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to pay tribute to Emil Marzullo, who is retiring as Director of the Special Districts Department for the County of San Bernardino, California, after 25 years of dedicated service to the people of California's Inland Empire.

The County of San Bernardino Special Districts Department manages dozens of local entities charged with providing a variety of vital public services ranging from fire protection and drinking water to parks and roadways. Mr. Marzullo took the helm of Special Districts in 1994 during very difficult economic times, when funding for these important services were increasingly scarce. Under his expert leadership the Department took on the responsibility of the County Franchise Authority and the restructuring of all water and sanitation districts and operations. These visionary reforms would come to be Mr. Marzullo's greatest accomplishments.

Mr. Marzullo was born in New Jersey and moved to California in 1965. He graduated from San Bernardino High School in 1971, received his B.A. in Geography and Environmental Studies from the University of California at Riverside in 1978, and a M.S. in Environmental Studies and Public Administration from California State University, Fullerton, in 1986. He began his county employment in January 1979 as an Environmental Specialist.

As an employee and later deputy director of the County Office of Community Development, Mr. Marzullo participated in or led the creation of more than 200 capital projects such as senior and community centers, playgrounds and parks, as well as water systems and fire safety facilities.

Serving as assistant director of special districts, he was instrumental in restructuring the Special Districts Department as well as the San Bernardino County Fire Department. In this capacity he trained the Board-governed commissions in the conduct of public meetings under the California Open Meetings Law and authored many of the related policies and board actions.

An esteemed member of the community, Mr. Marzullo served as a visiting professor at the Graduate School of Public Administration at California State University, San Bernardino, where he has lectured and led graduate seminars in Land Use Planning, Public Policy Analysis and Economic Development, and Local Development Finance. He also became a member of the Board of Directors and later the President of the Board for the Bethlehem House, a shelter and program for victims of domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, for more than two decades, Emil Marzullo has served the people of San Bernardino County well in a variety of important capacities, and the county will benefit from his accomplishments for many generations to come. Please join me in thanking him for his dedicated public service, and wishing him well as he takes a well-deserved retirement.

TRIBUTE TO LARRY MCCOOL

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding citizen; I am proud to recognize Larry Allen McCool in the Congress. His recent death was a great loss to his community, his family, his state and this nation.

Larry McCool was born in Kosciusko, Mississippi. He earned an education degree and taught history in a Jackson, MS, high school. When he wasn't teaching, he traveled around the country buying and selling unusual antiques and collectibles. Mr. McCool ended his teaching career in the early 1970s to pursue his own dreams and opened a shop in Jackson where he realized his potential in appraising antiques.

A four-time president of the Mississippi Auctioneers Association and president of the National Auctioneer's Association (NAA), Mr. McCool was a self-taught auctioneer who became one of the industry's foremost authorities on the appraisal and sale of antiques, fine arts and antebellum real estate. He continually pushed NAA to improve educational programs, increase its membership and revenues, and, most importantly, widen the charities NAA supported.

Despite his drive and dedication to auctioneering, Mr. McCool will be most remembered for his passion for charity auctions. On the day of his passing, he had planned to conduct an auction for a children's cancer fund, one of the many charities for which he raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for more than 25 years. Mr. McCool was named honorary chairman for the Hinds County chapter of the American Cancer Society, worked for the American Heart Association and volunteered his time to numerous charitable groups over the years.

On behalf of Congress, I extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. McCool's family and gratitude for the countless hours he spent serving others. He leaves a legacy of accomplishment in the industry as well as inspiring memories for those who knew him.

HONORING THE DEPARTMENT OF MISSOURI VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to honor the efforts of the Department of Missouri Veterans of Foreign Wars. In March 2003, this group launched the "Hidden Heroes" project to provide direct support to the families of deployed Missouri National Guardsmen and Reservists.

The "Hidden Heroes" program has made a real difference. In the first year of the program, families have been guests at dinners, banquets, and picnics. At the Christmas parties for the Air Force Reserve 442nd Central Postal Directory and the Army National Guard 1139th MPs, hundreds of toys were provided to the children of those serving. The Department of Missouri Veterans of Foreign Wars has also provided concert and sporting event tickets to family members. The efforts have helped to lift the spirits of these families.

The "Hidden Heroes" program has also helped to provide these families with food and other household products. When National Guard and Reserve members are deployed, their family incomes often fall by fifty percent or more. The Armories across Missouri participating in this pantry program are alleviating some of the financial strain experienced by these families that have already given so much.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Missouri Veterans of Foreign Wars have identified a need and are rallying resources to address it. I am sure my fellow Members will join me in thanking them for the service they continue to offer to this country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SERVITUDE AND EMANCIPATION ARCHIVAL RESEARCH CLEARING HOUSE (SEARCH) ACT OF 2004

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Servitude and Emancipation Archival Research Clearing House (SEARCH) Act of 2004, companion legislation to S. 1292 sponsored by Senator LANDRIEU. This bill would authorize the creation of a national database of servitude and emancipation records within the National Archives.

For most Americans, researching their genealogical history involves searching through municipal birth, death, and marriage records—most of which have been properly archived as public historical documents. However, African Americans in the United States face a unique challenge when conducting genealogical research.

Current records of emancipation and slavery are frequently inaccessible, poorly catalogued, and inadequately preserved from decay. Instead of looking up wills, land deeds, birth and death certificates, and other traditional genealogical research documents, African Ameri-

cans must often try to identify the name of former slave owners, hoping that the owners kept records of pertinent information such as births and deaths.

Although some states and localities have undertaken efforts to collect these documents with varying degrees of success, there is no national effort to preserve these pieces of public and personal history or to make them readily and easily accessible to all Americans. While entities like Howard University and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture Library have extensive African American archives, the SEARCH Act would create a centralized database for these historic records. This database would be administered by the Archivist of the United States as part of the National Archives.

Finally, the SEARCH Act would also authorize funding for States, colleges, and universities, to preserve, catalogue, as well as index servitude and emancipation records locally. It would make available up to \$5 million for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to establish and maintain the national database, as well as \$5 million in grants for States and academic institutions to conserve local records of servitude and emancipation.

I believe that this legislation will be a very important step in resurrecting the rich history of African Americans and the vital role that they played in building America. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the SEARCH Act as not only a means by which their constituents can trace their lineage, but also as a means by which we can preserve historically comprehensive and accurate information for generations to come.

IN MEMORY OF ELIEZER SCHWARTZ

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in memory of Eliezer Schwartz, and in anticipation of the Elie Schwartz Memorial Baldwin Classic Basketball game being held in his honor on Sunday, April 11.

I never had the opportunity to meet Elie, but the number of relatives, friends, and community members who will attend the basketball game represent a testament to the special young man he was. The son of Rabbi Gershon Schwartz and Dr. Shuly Rubin Schwartz, Elie was raised with a strong, unequivocal connection to the Jewish community. From his involvement in United Synagogue Youth, to his dedication to Israel, to his education at Brandeis University, Elie was a favorite among both his peers and adults.

Ten years ago, Elie was the driving force behind the Baldwin Classic, a 3-on-3 basketball tournament that became an annual event. It is quite appropriate that this year's game, the first since Elie's passing in November, be held in his honor, and the proceeds benefit the newly established Eliezer Schwartz Memorial Scholarship Fund of the METNY Region of USY.

Mr. Speaker, the contributions Elie made to our community in his short lifetime will not be forgotten. I know this year's Baldwin Classic

will be a very special day, and I applaud those working hard to keep Elie's ideals and goals instilled in their minds and hearts.

IN HONOR OF TOM ADAMS' FORTY
YEARS OF TEACHING AT ST.
MARK'S SCHOOL OF TEXAS

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a teaching legend at St. Mark's School of Texas. I am proud to represent St. Mark's in Congress. I am very familiar with the high excellence of education that St. Mark's provides to young men as my oldest son currently attends St. Mark's, and one of my staffers is also an alumnus of the school.

St. Mark's would not be nearly as successful an institution if it weren't for the scholarly teaching of Thomas S. Adams. Tom Adams is celebrating his 40th year of teaching at St. Mark's, and I honor him for his four decades of service to the school and the countless young men that have benefited from his teaching and insight.

Tom Adams currently serves as the Cecil and Ida Green Master Teaching Chair in History. He has held this position since 1980, and he has served as the Senior Master of the faculty from 1997–2002. Tom currently teaches U.S. History, Art History, and Modern World History.

In addition to his distinguished teaching in the classroom, Tom has coached the St. Mark's baseball team to twelve Southwest Preparatory Conference (SPC) Championships. In addition to his success with the baseball team, Coach Adams led the St. Mark's basketball team to six SPC Championships.

Tom Adams was appointed to the St. Mark's faculty on July 1, 1961 after receiving his B.A. from Princeton University and his M.A. from Harvard University. Adams is a lasting icon at St. Mark's, and I admire him for continuing to teach even after reaching his 40-year milestone. I wish Tom Adams, and the St. Mark's community all the best.

LEGISLATION TO MAKE BONUS DE-
PRECIATION A PERMANENT
PART OF OUR TAX CODE

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, today, Congressmen NEAL, UPTON, ENGLISH, TIAHRT and I have introduced legislation to make bonus depreciation a permanent part of our tax code. I appreciate the opportunity to make a statement on this important legislation.

As you know, the issue of bonus depreciation has been an important one over the past 2 years. On March 9, 2002, President Bush signed the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002 into law. This law allows businesses to accelerate the depreciation of equipment they purchase between September 11, 2001 and December 31, 2004. All equipment with a depreciable life of 20 years and

under qualifies for the bonus depreciation treatment. Originally they were entitled to get a bonus of 30 percent in the first year. Before this law, a \$1000 computer would be depreciated equally over 5 years. \$200 each year. With this change, businesses get \$175 in the first year, plus a 30 percent bonus. So, they depreciate \$475 in the first year and the remaining \$520 over the next 4 years (\$175 each year for 4 years).

H.R. 2, the 2003 tax cut law, included a provision to increase bonus depreciation to 50 percent through December 31, 2004. This provision became law in June 2003. This has helped stimulate the economy and create new jobs for Americans that are out of work.

Just today, the U.S. Department of Labor released statistics that prove that bonus depreciation and other tax cuts are working. Bonus depreciation is helping to bring jobs back to the U.S. economy and put American workers back to work. The Labor Department announcement indicates that the U.S. economy created 308,000 new jobs in March, this is the fastest monthly job growth since April 2000. The latest data show that more than 500,000 new jobs have been created in the first three months of 2004.

In another example, the General Aviation Manufacturers Association recently told me that in the first 5 months after enactment of the bonus depreciation provision sales of general aviation airplanes increased 45 percent.

Mr. Speaker, bonus depreciation and the other tax cuts are working. Our economy is rebounding. We need to make bonus depreciation and the other tax cuts permanent in our tax code. When making business decisions, companies need to know for sure that they can rely on these tax provisions.

I ask my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this important legislation.

COMMENDING SEAN BUTLER

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the achievement of an outstanding young man, Sean Butler. Through hard work and dedication he has achieved his goal, a goal that few young men have the courage, dedication, and character to achieve.

Sean's dedication has given him the title of Eagle Scout within the Boy Scouts of America. This program has long been recognized as a program that builds strong minds upon sound morals. Achieving an Eagle Scout status shows that this young man has participated in projects and activities that will help him become a strong man in life. It has shown him how to set reasonable and accomplishable goals, a value that will put him considerably ahead of his peers.

The Boy Scouts of America is a great building block for our youth and it is quite an achievement, with so many other activities available, for young men to receive their Eagle Scout Award. It is my hope that he will hold this award as a special honor; to always remember the principles and teachings he has learned, and to use this award as a tool in his future.

THE GREATER TEXARKANA
PEOPLES' CLINIC

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate The Greater Texarkana Peoples' Clinic on its grand opening. The clinic, whose motto is Good Health for All, was established to provide free, quality health care to qualifying residents in the greater Texarkana area, which includes Miller (Arkansas) and Bowie (Texas) Counties, who do not have access to basic medical services. The First United Methodist Church at 401 N. Stateline, Texarkana, Texas has offered its facilities as a site for the clinic.

Statistics from the Kaiser Family Foundation indicate that sixteen percent of Arkansans are uninsured and twenty-five percent of Texans are uninsured. In The Greater Texarkana Peoples' Clinic's medical service area, forty-one percent of their service area population is uninsured. Instead of waiting for a government fix, the people saw a need and set about solving that need. Thanks in part to Chaplain Jim Rowland, president of the Greater Texarkana Ministerial Alliance, Dr. Tim Reynolds, medical director, and Dr. D. Jack Smith, clinic board member, a non-judgmental, compassionate environment in which to serve those individuals and families largely rejected by mainstream society has been created. The Greater Texarkana Peoples' Clinic is truly the result of a collaborative community effort. Medical professionals throughout the Texarkana area along with numerous volunteers are generously giving their expertise, time and financial support to make this initiative an overwhelming success.

I join with the leadership of Texarkana, Arkansas and Texarkana, Texas in thanking and congratulating all that were involved in bringing The Greater Texarkana Peoples' Clinic to a reality. The clinic and its services will prove to be an asset for years to come.

HONORING NATALIE STERN, 2004
CHERRY BLOSSOM PRINCESS

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to recognize Ms. Natalie Stern, who will be representing New Jersey as our princess in the 2004 Cherry Blossom Princess Program.

Since 1948, state societies have selected accomplished female students to represent their states in the Cherry Blossom Princess Program. During the week-long program, the princesses participate in a number of events that provide them with an opportunity to share the culture and unique traditions of their state. The program culminates with a princess being crowned as the United States Cherry Blossom Queen, who will travel to Japan as a representative of the United States. During her two weeks in Japan, the U.S. Cherry Blossom Queen participates in events across the country and meets with Japanese dignitaries.

I am pleased that the New Jersey State Society picked Natalie Stern to represent our state in the festival. Ms. Stern is a shining example of the best New Jersey has to offer. She is a native of Pennington, New Jersey. She attended Stuart Country Day School in Princeton. Natalie continued her education at Indiana University and graduated in 2003 with two bachelor degrees. In addition to her studies at Indiana University, Natalie served as an intern at the White House as well as a fellow at the International Television and Radio Society in New York City.

I would like to extend my congratulations to Natalie and all of the other young women who have been selected to participate in the festival and I wish them all continued success in the future.

IN HONOR OF PETER TROXELL

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Peter Troxell who passed away March 17, 2004 after a prolonged battle with cancer. Earlier this year I rose to congratulate him on his retirement and I am saddened to hear of this great man's passing. He is survived by his wife, Diana, children Adriana, Lyle, and Marina, and six grandchildren.

Although Peter was best known for his role as station manager of KUSP, which he assumed in 1993, he has been a leader in our community since the 1960s. He was one of the founders of the Mountain Community Theatre in Ben Lomond, helped establish the San Lorenzo Valley Children's Center, and managed Oganookie, a local band from Santa Cruz's hippie days.

His leadership skills were put to the test when he became the station manager of KUSP. The station was facing hard times internally and out, and might not have survived without Peter's tireless dedication. It is a testament to his skills as a businessman that we have KUSP in Santa Cruz today. But even with these new responsibilities, Peter never forgot his love of the arts. Even those who have never met Peter will recognize him as the host of the weekly shows "State of the Arts" and "In the Green Room."

Mr. Speaker, I rise once more to applaud Peter Troxell's many accomplishments. He was a remarkable figure in our community, and his memory will live on in the many people whose lives he has touched. I join the County of Santa Cruz, and friends and family in honoring this truly admirable man and all of his lifelong achievements.

WEST VIRGINIA QUARTER: NEW RIVER GORGE BRIDGE

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, my home State of West Virginia chose a representation of the New River Gorge Bridge to decorate the new West Virginia commemorative quarter to be

issued next year by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

The New River Gorge Bridge resides close to my home in Southern West Virginia. It symbolizes West Virginia's beauty, ingenuity, hard work, and our peoples' determination to do what many deem the impossible.

Until recently, the New River Gorge Bridge was the longest single arch bridge in the world. Today, it is only surpassed by the Lupu Bridge recently built in Shanghai, China, but it is not surpassed in the eyes and hearts of West Virginians and those who look upon it.

The New River Gorge is the sun around which West Virginia's ever-expanding numbers of tourism initiatives revolve. It is the Grand Canyon of the east—one of America's oldest and most spectacular natural wonders. More Americans—indeed, more people from all around the world—discover our New River Gorge every year.

I have spent a career protecting the New River Gorge. The bridge and the river are not only nationally acclaimed recreation destinations; they also generate jobs and contribute greatly to Southern West Virginia's economy.

Construction began on the New River Gorge Bridge in June of 1974, and was opened for the public's use on October 22, 1977. The enormous undertaking, and breathtaking result reduced a forty-minute drive down windy mountain roads to a one-minute trip over one of the world's greatest tourist attractions.

On the third Saturday of each October the New River Gorge Bridge is open to pedestrians, where hundreds of thousands of people get to walk the span of the bridge and enjoy a number of events, arts, and crafts. Some brave outdoor enthusiasts also use this day to parachute from the center of the bridge to the river basin 876 feet below. This day is referred to as "Bridge Day," and it is a day that brings people from all over the world to Southern West Virginia.

The New River Gorge Bridge represents what is best about West Virginia, our breathtaking natural beauty, and our people's skill and ingenuity. It is fitting that the New River Gorge Bridge was chosen to represent my home State in the commemorative coin series, and it is truly "Wild and Wonderful" news.

MS. ROBIN EVANS: A FOND FAREWELL FROM CAPITOL HILL

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member would ask his colleagues join in commending and congratulating a long-time employee in this Member's personal office, Ms. Robin Evans, who is retiring next week after almost 23 years of congressional service. This Member hired Robin on February 1, 1982, and she has worked for this Member continually since that time with the exception of a 9-month period when Robin tried working for the other body, but she saw the light and returned to the House and this Member's office as our Office Manager.

Robin is one of those exceptionally outstanding employees who does her work exceptionally well and in a very professional manner. She is one of the most organized,

conscientious, and capable people that this Member has had the pleasure to work with in his many years of congressional service. Robin will be greatly missed not only by this Member and this Member's staff, but also by the many people on Capitol Hill and in my constituency in Nebraska who have worked with her throughout these many years.

Please join this Member in wishing Robin all the best as she returns to her home area on Maryland's Eastern Shore and embarks upon a new career with the Morgan Stanley office in Salisbury, MD.

IN HONOR OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF RESTON, VIRGINIA AND THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF ITS FOUNDER, ROBERT E. SIMON, JR.

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia and I rise today to commemorate the 40 anniversary of Reston, Virginia and the 90th birthday of its legendary founder, Robert E. Simon, Jr.

Bob Simon grew up in New York immersed in his family's thriving real estate business, Hecser Corp. He attended Harvard University, and upon the passing of his father in 1935, took over the family business. While running Hecser Corp., Simon escaped the city by residing in Syosset, a suburb of Long Island. There he grew to value a lifestyle in which one could live, work, and play in the same desirable community.

In 1961, an offer for 6,750 lush acres 18 miles west of Washington, DC, caught Simon's attention. He inspected the land, instantly fell in love, and invested in the rolling green hills of Fairfax County. Simon sought to create a community to embody his ideals; he envisioned a well-rounded, self-sufficient community that respected the dignity of the individual and preserved the land's natural beauty.

He launched his development project at a time when the Commonwealth of Virginia still was segregated; nonetheless, Simon bravely fought for a community in which people of all backgrounds could live peacefully together. He put Dr. Martin Luther King's principles to practice and always will be remembered for his commitment to integration. Many investors turned away from Simon's concept, yet Gulf Oil accepted, providing critical resources and support for the project.

After securing funding, Simon worked closely with noted planners, architects, and environmentalists to transform his vision into a reality. Perhaps most notable was his innovative notion of clustered housing, leaving open land and improving the appearance and quality of the area. Simon's development team and those that succeeded them were able to realize his dream community, aptly naming it Reston, using the founder's initials and the English suffix for town. As Reston developed, numerous organizations such as the United States Geological Survey relocated to the area, bringing much needed employment and residents. In 1990, development began on the Reston Town Center, which produced a lasting, positive impact on the community.

Today, over 58,000 call 11.5 square mile Reston home. Reston has attracted national and worldwide recognition as one of the "best places to live," truly surpassing all expectations. Forty years ago Simon had a dream, and it appears as though this dream has come true. As Simon intended, Reston has become a thriving residential, commercial, industrial, cultural, and civic center where urban seamlessly meets rural.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, we would like to congratulate Reston on 40 years of success and wish its residents the best of luck in the many years to come. We ask that our colleagues join us in applauding this notable accomplishment and in wishing Bob Simon a happy celebration of Reston's success and his 90th birthday.

MINIMUM TAX AND PRIVATE ACTIVITY BONDS INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I first introduced legislation to repeal the individual alternative minimum tax on April 14, 1999, and have been warning about the dangers of letting this problem fester ever since. While the broad problem has since become better known (albeit not addressed in any meaningful way), little attention has been paid to the plethora of nagging problems caused by the neglect of the Bush Administration of this issue—problems I have addressed one at a time in additional legislation over the years.

The latest example of the cost of this Administration's neglect is the impact the alternative minimum tax is having, and will have, on private activity bonds; as discussed in an insightful analysis by John Buckley (Minority Chief Tax Counsel, Committee on Ways and Means) published in BNA's *The Daily Tax Report* March 1st. As a leader, along with Rep. Amo Houghton, in expanding the use of private activity bonds for low and moderate income housing, I am particularly sensitive to the adverse affect the AMT is having on the market for housing bonds.

The failure of the Bush Administration to address the issue of the AMT meaningfully means that the number of families subject to the minimum tax is skyrocketing. Without further action by Congress, 78.6 percent of families with incomes between \$75,000 and \$100,000, and 95 percent of all families with incomes between \$100,000 and \$500,000, will pay the minimum tax in the future. While the impact of the alternative minimum tax has become widely known, few recognize its impact on private activity bonds. Approximately 75 percent of all tax-exempt bonds are held directly or indirectly by individual investors. These investors generally have annual incomes that in the future will, as indicated above, almost guarantee that they will pay the alternative minimum tax. As a result, the individual market for tax-exempt private activity bonds is quickly eroding and could disappear entirely in the future.

Already the financial markets have begun to recognize this serious problem. Not only have some mutual funds reportedly announced their

intention of not investing in bonds subject to the AMT, but higher interest rates are being offered in connection with these bonds. In 2000, private activity bonds were issued at average interest rates of about 104 percent of the rate offered on tax-exempt general obligation bonds, presumably reflecting slightly greater risk. In 2003, the average interest rate had increased on tax-exempt bonds to about 110 percent of the rate offered on tax-exempt general obligation bonds.

Some will argue that this is a problem that can wait for another day since the number of individuals subject to the minimum tax will explode only in the future. They are wrong. Tax-exempt bonds quite often are issued for terms as long as 30 years. The fact that an exemption may have value today but not in five years, will affect the interest rate at which those obligations are currently being issued.

Mr. Speaker, this country is now being forced to face the consequences of the Bush tax cut agenda. The deficit has exploded while the Administration swats at flies in non-defense discretionary spending, the value of our currency is declining as investors both here and abroad lose faith in our fiscal policies, and the International Monetary Fund recently criticized the fiscal policies of the Bush Administration in terms that previously had been used only in the context of developing nations. We are again seeing growing income inequalities as the wages paid to average workers stagnate and jobs flee the country.

These are some of the economic issues that divide the two parties in Congress, and we can and will vigorously debate them in the future. However, I believe that we should attempt to take action on a bipartisan basis to limit the adverse and unintended impacts of the alternative minimum tax. The bill I am introducing today, along with my colleague from New York STEVE ISRAEL, simply removes tax-exempt interest on private activity bonds from the individual alternative minimum tax. While failure to act would mean that Congress does not place as much emphasis on providing decent housing for the less fortunate as it seems to, I am confident that that is not the case. However, I am worried that this problem, as other problems involving the minimum tax, will simply be band aided over until that mythical time in the future when we tackle the AMT problem as a whole.

TRIBUTE TO OMAR D. BLAIR

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the extraordinary life and accomplishments of a remarkable gentleman from the 1st Congressional District of Colorado. It is both fitting and proper that we recognize Omar D. Blair for his impressive record of civic leadership and invaluable service.

Many people have made notable contributions to our community, but few have left a legacy of progress as Omar Blair. He once mused that he wanted to be remembered as one who tried. I would submit that Omar Blair molded a life of enduring accomplishment and proved to be a powerful force in transforming our community. His is an indomitable spirit

and our lives have been truly enriched by his presence among us.

Omar Blair demonstrated that he had steel at an early age. Upon his graduation from Albuquerque High School in 1936, the school board determined that the six black graduates had to sit behind their classmates and would not have a spotlight shone on them as they received their diplomas. But Omar was not intimidated. He walked with dignity up to the stage in darkness to get his diploma to the ovation of his classmates. Years later, he was awarded "Outstanding Graduate of the Past 100 Years" by the same people who would not allow him to sit with his classmates forty-three years earlier.

Omar attended the University of California at Los Angeles prior to entering the Army Air Corps during World War II. Captain Blair belonged to the all-black 332nd Fighter Squadron—the famed Tuskegee Airmen—where he developed a reputation for daring. His squadron had been called upon to escort bombers on a raid over Berlin, but their fighters needed bigger fuel tanks to go the distance and they were not available through normal channels. Captain Blair learned that the needed tanks were on an Army train coming from Naples. He organized a convoy, stopped the train and forcibly offloaded the tanks as they were critical to his squadron's mission. Captain Blair got the job done and the bombing raid went off without a hitch.

In 1951, Omar and his wife Jeweldine, came to Denver. He found work and started a family that grew to include three children. He also found time to get involved in public affairs and was elected to the Denver Board of Education in 1972. He served two terms and was voted the first African American to serve as president of the school board. He led our city through what was arguably the most tumultuous era for public education in Denver. The schools were under court order to desegregate and Mr. Blair and other board members became the driving force to implement the order through busing. But his tenure on the board was not about changing how kids got to school; it was about fundamental change and the quality of public education. For Omar Blair, integrating schools did not mean simply having students sit with one another. It meant integrating school resources, providing new textbooks, hiring more teachers and making sure schools were uniformly upgraded and maintained. In short, it meant equal education for all of our children.

Omar served as President of the Colorado Association of School Boards, Vice President of the National Caucus of Black School Board Members, and National President of the Council of Great City Schools. But his service was not limited to education. He served as a Commissioner of the Denver Urban Renewal Authority during the time when he and his colleagues initiated the 16th Street Mall Project. He was a founding member of the Greater Park Hill Sertoma Club and his work was recognized by Sertoma International. He served as President of the Owls Club of Denver and as a board member of the Denver Chamber of Commerce and the East Denver YMCA.

Omar was honored on numerous occasions and his accolades include: the American-Israel Friendship League's Partners in Education Award; the U.S. Department of Justice Award for Outstanding Community Service and an honorary "Doctor of Public Service" degree

from Metropolitan State College of Denver. His church, Shorter Community AME, dedicated its community room in his name and on April 26, 2003, the City and County of Denver named the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library in recognition of his lifetime of service to our community. But accolades don't tell the whole story. Omar once made a poignant reference in an article that after 52 years of marriage to Jeweldine, "You can put this in big bold letters—without her I would not be half the person I am and I know that." Not only was Omar Blair a man of accomplishment, he was a man who was well-grounded with a clear sense of what mattered.

Omar Blair was an unrelenting advocate for the causes that elevate the human condition. He burnished a reputation of being forthright, pragmatic, outspoken and "taking on all comers." But ultimately, he was dedicated to our children—all of our children. He constantly reiterated that "the kids are what it's all about" and I believe his legacy to us is to never waver in our commitment to future generations.

Omar Blair lived a life of meaning and one that is rich in consequence. It is the character and deeds of Omar Blair, and all Americans like him, which distinguish us as a people. Truly, we are all diminished by the passing of this remarkable person. Please join me in paying tribute to the life of Omar D. Blair, a distinguished citizen. It is the values, leadership and commitment he exhibited during his life that serves to build a better future for all Americans.

HONORING ROSEMARIE FLORENCE
FREENEY HARDING

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my colleague, LOIS CAPPS, to honor the legacy of Rosemarie Harding, a mother, counselor, social worker, and teacher. On March 1, 2004, Rose departed at the age of 73, surrounded by loved ones who prayed and sang her passage to the other side.

Rosemarie Florence Freney Harding was born July 24, 1930 to Dock Freney, Jr. and Ella Lee Harris Freney. She was the youngest of nine siblings, a sweet and keenly intuitive child who was deeply loved. After graduating from high school, she spent two years at Chicago Teachers College. In 1955, Rose graduated from Goshen College in Indiana with a major in sociology.

After completing her bachelor's degree, Rose returned to Chicago and worked as a social worker and teacher, during which time she served Bethel Mennonite Church as a lay counselor. In 1959 she met Vincent Harding at a church conference. Rosemarie and Vincent married in 1960 and moved to Atlanta, Georgia in 1961 as representatives of the Mennonite Central Committee. There, they opened up their home as the South's first interracial voluntary service center, Mennonite House. This was an important gathering place for Civil Rights activists, who found respite, hospitality, encouragement and stimulating dialogue.

After her children were born, Rosemarie worked as a substitute teacher and helped

found the city's first interracial preschool as well as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community School, one of Atlanta's earliest independent black day schools. She also helped found the Guardians, an advocacy group dedicated to ensuring black parents a voice in the desegregation of Atlanta public schools. In 1974, Rosemarie and her family moved to Philadelphia where she continued her involvement in progressive political activism and helped raise several grandnieces and nephews. In 1978, she earned a masters degree in history and women's studies at Goddard College. Rosemarie also served in various volunteer capacities at the American Friends Service Committee and traveled to Brazil in 1980 to evaluate the organization's support for faith-based social justice initiatives.

From 1979 to 1981 Rosemarie worked at the Pendle Hill Quaker Study, where she and her husband developed a series of courses on spirituality and social justice. When the couple moved to Denver in 1981, Rosemarie continued to co-teach these courses with Vincent at the Iliff School of Theology. Increasingly, the couple traveled throughout the U.S. and internationally, conducting workshops, giving lectures, and sharing insights with educators, activists, religious leaders, and others. After receiving a masters degree in social work, Rosemarie worked for the Family Crisis Center in Denver. She treated colleagues and clients with great respect and often found gentle and creative ways to resolve even the most intransigent conflicts.

As the first member of her family to finish college, Rosemarie was a mentor and example to all of her nieces and nephews; always assisting and encouraging them. She helped with homework, shared her love for writing and reading, and provided opportunities for her younger relatives to travel and broaden their horizons. She was the mediator in the family—the one who, in the midst of tensions or arguments, could calm the storm. She didn't teach by dictate, but by example. She also loved to laugh and dance and was most happy when those around her were also enjoying themselves.

She leaves many to mourn her death and to celebrate her life: Vincent, her husband of 43 years; Rachel, her daughter; Jonathan, her son; her adopted son, Geshe Thupten Kunsang; her sisters Alma Campbell, Mildred Dozier and Sue Verrett; her nieces and nephews Louis, Maxine, Frank, Robert, Lottie, Carmen, Thomas, Francetta, Nataleen, Eileen, Anita, Tommy, Donna, Jimmy, James, Jean, Gloria, Phillip, Rose, JoAnn, Harvey, Walter, Felicia and Claude; and a host of other dearly beloved relatives and friends.

I take great pride in joining Rosemarie's family and colleagues to salute the extraordinary Rosemarie Harding. I want to thank her on behalf of the entire 9th Congressional District for her great heart and generous soul. She has been a friend who has shared her wisdom and has given me support.

STATE CHAMPIONS TIMES THREE

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, while the nation focuses on the culmination of the NCAA men's

basketball March Madness and the Final Four this weekend in San Antonio, Texas, the Sixth District of North Carolina is already basking in the glow as the home of three state high school basketball championship teams. Trinity High School in Randolph County, Thomasville High School in Davidson County, and Westchester Academy in Guilford County are the respective homes for high school basketball champions this season, and we are proud to acknowledge their tremendous seasons here.

Trinity High School completed a remarkable season on March 13 at the Dean Smith Center in Chapel Hill when it captured the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) 3-A boys basketball championship with a win over Dudley High School of Greensboro. Led by state Coach of the Year Tim Kelly and state Player of the Year Josh King, the Bulldogs finished the year with a 31-1 record.

Despite that gaudy regular season record, many people did not give Trinity much of a chance going into the game against the Dudley Panthers. Coach Kelly told the Greensboro News & Record that a tough regular season schedule prepared his baby-faced warriors for the toughest battle of the year. "We think we saw the right mix to get here," Coach Kelly told the newspaper. "We didn't get a free pass. We didn't get to pass go and collect \$200. We had to pay our way to get here and our kids were aggressive. We might look like choirboys when we walk into the building, but we're not. We're going to attack and be aggressive on both ends of the floor."

When it was over, the Bulldogs celebrated a 73-64 win over the Panthers, led by King's 21 points, along with 18 from championship game MVP John McEachin. Coach Kelly will tell you, however, that it took a total team effort to beat a talented Dudley squad. "I really feel like this team was destined to win tonight," the coach concluded. "We wish (Dudley) luck next year with everything they have coming back. I'd hate to have to play them next year, but maybe we'll get that opportunity."

So do all the Bulldogs fans, but before we look ahead to next season, let's take one more moment to savor this year's championship. Congratulations are in order to Coach Kelly and his assistants, Joey Freeman, Richard Brendle, Richard Austin, Lindy Hall, Brent McDowell, and Brian Nance. Again, led by Player of the Year King, and MVP McEachin, every member of the Bulldogs can take pride in the title quest. The other members of the championship team included J.B. McDowell, Jason Lewis, Spencer Smith, Jonathan Watts, Tim Kelly, Brian Downing, David Idol, Matt Watkins, Dane Young, Ben King, and Dustin Everett.

Assisting all season long were managers Kristy Craig, Jennifer Hiatt, Carson Wheeler, Jerome Porter, along with statisticians Ashley Gentry and Blair Farlow. To Principal Daryl Barnes, Athletic Director Doug Tuggle, the coaches, players, students, faculty, staff, family, and friends of the Trinity Bulldogs, we say congratulations for capturing the 3-A state boys basketball championship.

Speaking of threes, the girls basketball team at Thomasville High School is celebrating its third straight NCHSAA 1-A state championship. Also known as the Bulldogs, Thomasville defeated Farmville Central 67-48 on March 13 to win the crown at the Smith Center in Chapel Hill. It was the second year in a row that

Thomasville defeated Farmville Central in the title contest, but this year the squad was led by someone who wasn't even supposed to start the game. Charnette Davis was surprised by Head Coach Eric Rader when she was tapped to be in the starting lineup, and Charnette responded by scoring 18 points and pulling down 11 rebounds to be selected as the game's MVP. Charnette was also named as the MVP of the Western Regional final.

This third crown capped a remarkable 30–1 season, and Coach Rader told the High Point Enterprise that, in his mind, the final outcome was never in doubt. "When you have the heart of a champion like these ladies do, they never lose," Rader told the newspaper. For the last three years, the Thomasville Bulldogs have not lost and can celebrate this "three-peat" with pride and honor. The citizens of the Sixth District congratulate Coach Rader and his assistants Sara Larrick, Holly Harvey and Kelvin Caraway. In addition to MVP Davis, every member of the Thomasville girls basketball team contributed to the third straight title, including Leah Harris, Impris Manning, Mary Allen, Brittany Marsh, LaShonda Cosby, Wudi Alford (who was named Most Outstanding Player for her 18-point performance in the championship game), Brittany Sanders, Tameka Thomas, Erin Crowder, Kendra Rutledge, Sha Harris, and Jenny Burgess. Providing valuable assistance all season long were managers Byron Lattimore, Andrew Oakley, Clifton Carroll, along with statistician Shanterra Robinson and video coordinator Jonathan Caraway.

Again, we congratulate Principal Dick Gurley, Athletic Director Woody Huneycutt, the coaches, players, students, faculty, staff, family and friends of Thomasville High School on the winning of their third straight 1–A girls basketball championship.

In keeping with our theme of threes, another high school in our district won its third boys basketball championship in five years and its second in a row. On February 28, Westchester Academy of High Point won the North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association (NCISAA) 2–A title. The Wildcats defeated Carolina Day of Asheville 74–52 at Ravenscroft High School in Raleigh. Even though this was not the first title for Westchester, Head Coach Pat Kahny said this one was significant. "This was special," Coach Kahny told the High Point Enterprise. "There was a lot of pressure trying to repeat as the number one seed, and there was pressure because we played before the biggest crowd all year."

The title contest culminated a tremendous 29–2 season for the Wildcats. Following two consecutive losses at a tournament in December, Westchester ran off 20 straight wins on its way to the championship. Leading the way to the title was Jacob Briles, who poured in 37 points in the championship game while Toby Grauel added 21. Coach Kahny, however, does not think the offensive firepower the determining factor in the outcome. "Our defense in the second quarter was the key," Coach Kahny told the Enterprise. We forced a number of turnovers and got several easy baskets in transition. They (Carolina Day) have a very good offensive team. To hold them to 23 points in the first half was a tremendous effort."

Coach Kahny and his assistants Ken Hyde and Adam Schwartz led that tremendous effort

all season long. In addition to Briles and Grauel, the members of the winning squad included Britt Hutchens, Myles Pearl, Kemil Kepinski, Will Moore, Dexter Garner, Coleman Team, Jack Vance, Emir Dukic, Jack Tucker, Anthony Peters, Robert Byrd, and Tuck Tucker. Supporting the squad all season long were managers Candice Gilliland, Andrea McNamara, Kathryn Thompson, and Jeff Galloway along with publicist Lore Fariss.

Once more, we are pleased to congratulate Headmaster Tommy Hudgins, Athletic Director Kahny, the coaches, players, students, faculty, staff, family and friends of Westchester Academy for winning the NCISAA 2–A boys basketball championship.

On a final note, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to acknowledge that either current or former staffers of mine are graduates of Trinity, Thomasville and Westchester. It makes their state championships all the more sweet, and we offer our heartfelt thanks for making us proud.

HONORING JOAN KERSCHNER

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to recognize the achievements of Joan Kerschner, director of the Henderson District Public Libraries in Henderson, Nevada. It is a great honor to publicly recognize the achievements and contributions of this exceptional woman.

Joan Kerschner has been a leader in the library sciences field for many years. In 1972 she graduated with a master's degree from Indiana University in Library Science. Since her first job as a librarian she has helped both the young and old, using her skills and knowledge to provide the vast amount of information that can be found within our libraries for research projects, practical questions, and personal knowledge seekers.

Since her graduation in 1972 she has served on many councils and committees to help promote and further the use of libraries and library services. She, along with myself, is a firm believer in promoting the use of available knowledge to all those that seek it. She discovered the advantages of seeking knowledge through her job, but wanted to help those around her to discover it as well.

Since Joan's arrival in Henderson, she has helped bring about the opening of the first new public library since 1989. In 2001 she received the Henderson Economic Development Award for Public Person of the year. She has been a member of the Education Committee of the Henderson Chamber of Commerce and the Issues Committee of Henderson Development Association. This past year she served as president of the Henderson Rotary.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Joan Kerschner on her achievements and her community contributions. I hope that all of my colleagues will support me in giving thanks to her for her contributions and example of what knowledge and information can accomplish for those that seek it in their lives.

THE VOIP REGULATORY FREEDOM ACT OF 2004

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "VoIP Regulatory Freedom Act of 2004," in conjunction with my colleague in the United States Senate, Mr. SUNUNU, who will be introducing the companion version of this bill in that Chamber today.

This act will grant regulatory freedom to a new and exciting technology known as voiceover-Internet-protocol, or VoIP, by prohibiting the imposition of unnecessary federal, state and local regulation in order to allow this emerging technology to grow and develop. VoIP has flourished and prospered thus far because of the relatively hands-off approach taken by regulators and concomitantly the effectiveness and robust nature of the competitive marketplace. In order to ensure the continued success of this new technology, and the concurrent benefits which it delivers to the American consumer, we must prevent the wholesale or even piecemeal application of outdated regulations.

VoIP is the technology that allows voice communications to be converted into "packets" and transported with data over an IP network, such as the public internet or a privately managed IP network, to the desired location using IP addressing. The end result is a more innovative and technologically-advanced service to the consumer, while also the most efficient and cost-effective method by which to communicate.

Because VoIP is predominantly interstate in nature, the bill provides for a prohibition of state and local regulation and taxation of the application. This in no way implies that states and localities do not play a very important role in our federalist system as it relates to telecommunications policy. Rather, because of the unique attributes of this technology, including its mobility in some instances, a general inability to decipher the actual origination of calls in other instances, and the irrelevant treatment of area codes when assigning numbers, it would be deleterious to impose a patchwork of 50 different sets of regulatory regimes on such a nascent and far-reaching technology.

Having said all that, I do recognize that there are specific types of VoIP applications that have the capability to send calls to or receive calls from the public switched telephone network ("PSTN"), which I refer to as "connected VoIP applications." By sending and receiving calls to the PSTN, providers of connected VoIP applications will have to assume some obligations, such as (1) some type of interprovider compensation; (2) contribution to the Universal Service Fund; (3) compliance with law enforcement access; and (4) industry consensus on social obligations such as 911 service, disability access, reliability and security.

First, in light of the capability to send calls to or receive calls from the PSTN, the bill recognizes an obligation on the part of providers of connected VoIP applications to compensate others for the use of their facilities and equipment on the PSTN through some sort of interprovider compensation, which will be determined by the Federal Communications Commission. When making this determination, the

FCC must take into account the differing geographic markets, especially the rural areas, which make up our country. The FCC will also be required to include a transition period, to allow the providers to adequately adjust to a new regime of compensation.

Second, by sending and receiving calls to the PSTN, providers of connected VoIP applications will be required to contribute to the overarching national goal of universal access to and affordable telephony for all Americans. When deciding upon the best methodology by which to assess such providers, the FCC will consider a variety of contribution methodologies. However, the main goal in applying USF to connected VoIP application providers is ensuring that the Fund is sustainable over the long term, and the FCC must seek to maximize to the greatest extent possible contributions into the Fund.

Under both scenarios, the bill will require the FCC to complete a rulemaking within 6 months to decide how such providers will meet their obligations. While this bill only addresses a small sliver of the overarching deficiencies associated with the universal service fund and the interprovider compensation regime, I intend to propose new legislation in the next few weeks that will tackle both issues head on and require a definitive conclusion to these perplexing problems.

Third, because of all the potential capabilities of this technology, we would be hard-pressed not to allow access by law enforcement. Especially in the day and age in which we live, including this time of war, we must always be thinking of our overall national security. Therefore, the bill would require the FCC to examine the technologically feasibility of requiring law enforcement access to such technology. If and when the FCC determines that it is technologically feasible and reasonable to do so, providers of connected VoIP applications will then be required to comply with law enforcement. While this may be somewhat burdensome on the industry, the value of our security far outweighs any burden which may be imposed. Security of our citizens will always be our number one priority.

In sum, the "VoIP Regulatory Freedom Act of 2004" bill will provide certainty in an area of the telecommunications industry that is significantly changing the way people communicate with one another. By establishing a new regime for this constantly-evolving technology, separate and apart from the outdated and archaic statutes and regulations applicable to traditional circuit-switched telephony, I believe we are laying the necessary groundwork for a new era of telecommunications.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with you and other members of the House, as well as our colleagues in the Senate, to achieve a bipartisan consensus on this most important initiative.

CONGRESSIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CAUCUS (CHRC) BRIEFING ON PROPOSED UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: STATEMENT BY CHRC CO-CHAIR, CONGRESSMAN TOM LANTOS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on March 30th, the Congressional Human Rights Caucus held a groundbreaking Members Briefing entitled, "International Disability Rights: The Proposed UN Convention." This discussion of the global situation of people with disabilities was intended to help establish disability rights issues as an integral part of the general human rights discourse. The briefing brought together the human rights community and the disability rights community, and it raised awareness in Congress of the need to protect disability rights under international law to the same extent as other human rights through a binding UN convention on the rights of people with disabilities.

The Caucus welcomed as expert witnesses Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Mark P. Lagon; the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ecuador to the United Nations, Ambassador Luis Gallegos; the United Nations Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Johan Schölvinn; the distinguished former Attorney General of the United States, former Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and former Governor of Pennsylvania, the Honorable Dick Thornburgh; the President of the National Organization on Disability (NOD), Alan A. Reich; Kathy Martinez, a member of the National Council on Disabilities (NCD); and a representative of the United States International Council on Disabilities (USCID) and Executive Director of Mental Disability Rights International, Eric Rosenthal. I intend to place their important statements in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, so that all of my colleagues may profit from their expertise, and I ask that my own statement at the briefing be placed at this point of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to welcome you to today's Congressional Human Rights Caucus Briefing on international disability rights and the proposed UN Convention.

I would like to thank the Co-Chair of the Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus, James Langevin, as well as my good friends Peter King, Betty McCollum, Jim Moran and Jim Cooper for attending this important briefing. We all owe a special thanks to our former colleague, the former Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Benjamin Gilman, for his active participation in this briefing. His support for this noble cause is invaluable.

This is the first time that the Congressional Human Rights Caucus has held a briefing on international disability rights. While I am very pleased that the Caucus is holding this groundbreaking briefing today, the mere fact that this is the first of its kind highlights an important shortcoming of the work of the human rights community, which, so far, has largely been absent in its support for the disability community.

Ladies and gentlemen, an estimated 600 million people in the world have a disability

of various types and degrees. The day-to-day life of 25 percent of the world's population is affected by disability—affecting entire families, not just individuals. 80 percent of the world's people with a disability live in developing countries, where only 1 percent to 2 percent have access to the necessary rehabilitation services. The majority of an estimated 150 million children with disabilities worldwide remain deprived of learning opportunities. Only 2 percent of children who have disabilities in developing countries are attending schools or have access to rehabilitation facilities.

These facts only begin to describe the global disparities in the living conditions of persons with disabilities. According to the recent State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, in the People's Republic of China, some protection laws were passed and attention to disability issues raised, particularly in light of the upcoming Special Olympics in 2007. However, a wide gap exists between protection laws and the practical implementation. Additionally, some remaining legal provisions outrightly contradict those protection laws. The Maternal and Child Health Care Law prohibits the marriage of persons with certain specified contagious diseases or certain acute mental illnesses. If doctors find that a couple is at risk of transmitting disabling congenital defects to their children, the couple may marry only if they agree to use birth control or undergo sterilization. Doctors frequently force parents of children with disabilities to place those children in state-run institutions, which cannot provide adequate rehabilitation. Government statistics showed that almost one-quarter of the approximately 60 million persons with disabilities live in extreme poverty. The Higher Education Law enables universities to legally exclude disabled candidates for higher education. Other countries also have codified laws to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities, but fail to implement them. Traditional myths and misconceptions further compound harsh living conditions for people with disabilities. For example, in Zimbabwe according to traditional beliefs, persons with disabilities are considered bewitched, and reports of children with disabilities being hidden when visitors arrive are common.

In response to the existing global discrepancies, the UN set non-binding standards in 1993 through the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UN res48/96). To further strengthen international standards, the General Assembly established an Ad Hoc Committee in 2001, which is charged with the drafting of a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. The Ad Hoc Committee is chaired by Ambassador Luis Gallegos, whom we welcome today to this briefing. Currently, 27 countries and 12 representatives of NGOs participate in a working group, which is considering draft proposals for such a convention, and which reports to the Ad Hoc Committee.

Unfortunately, some critics have come forward and spoken out against this noble effort, characterizing it as either needless, naive, or too complex for an international solution. Arguments such as: "Are we really going to tell the poorest countries of the world that they now have to build ramps for people in wheelchairs, when they barely can feed their citizens?" do not only miss the purpose of a Convention, but also do not recognize the realities on the ground.

To address the latter point on the practical implications first, I am fully convinced that poor and developing countries can only move forward in their development if they include

people with disabilities. It is impossible to feed a starving population on the ground with food donations when, as I have mentioned earlier, a significant number of people in the developing world have a disability, and cannot even reach this food aid. International Donor countries could have hardly intended to provide food aid so we all can witness scenes on television reminiscent of Darwin's "Survival of the Fittest," where only the strong survive. The same is true for any economic development. If significant numbers of people are excluded from any development and opportunities in a country, we can expect their dependence on international aid to continue. Furthermore, how can persons who are deaf or blind ever benefit from significant efforts in the global fight against HIV/AIDS, if they cannot be part of any education campaign, an issue recently addressed in a New York Times article from Sunday, March 28th? The United States can hardly change the infrastructure of a country over night. Nor can we do it alone, we need the international community and encourage all nations to move forward with our guidance and support.

Critics also miss the point of what the purpose of the proposed Convention really is. The most important role of the proposed convention is the elevation of disability rights to the highest level of international law. Only if we can establish an internationally verifiable consensus on what disability rights are and through what mechanisms they can be achieved, can we expect to make them part of a meaningful international dialogue. This is exactly the purpose of other UN human rights instruments the US has not only entered into, but helped bring into existence, most notably the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which has become part of customary international law. This convention most certainly is not a "silver bullet" for all disability rights problems everywhere, nor does it change the situation in a country over night, only because it has become a party to this treaty. It also does not serve to "threaten" developing countries with the overnight implementation of unachievable goals and standards, but to offer an opportunity for a country to commit itself to a verifiable journey toward standards, which are the result of an international agreement. I think it behooves the United States to let other countries benefit from our expertise and the standards we have achieved, most notably in the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are undoubtedly the leading nation on disability rights, and we are the sole remaining superpower. This unique position realistically means that we can either provide active leadership toward passage of such a document, ensuring that it gains international credibility, or we can stand aside. Therefore, I was disappointed by the remarks of former Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Ralph Boyd, before the Ad Hoc Committee on June 18, 2003. In his remarks, Assistant Attorney General Boyd, recognized that "Unfortunately, persons with disabilities have too often been the targets of improper discrimination . . ." and continues that: ". . . the activism and attention of UN Member States brings hope that one day they will be seamlessly integrated into the societies in which they live." Interestingly enough, the U.S. does not seem to be one of those states infected with "activism and attention," as he points out that—while the US has a lot of experience, and other countries are more than welcome to learn from us—we do so considering our "comprehensive domestic laws protecting those with disabilities, not with the expectation that we will become party to any resulting legal instrument."

We have invited the Department of Justice to participate in today's briefing, but the Department declined our invitation yesterday. I find it very curious that the Department of Justice speaks at the United Nations about these issues, but has nobody available to share their position with Members of Congress at this briefing today.

I, and all of my colleagues on the International Relations Committee, strongly disagreed with the position expressed by former Assistant Attorney General Boyd when we passed unanimously H. Con. Res. 169, a bill I have introduced in strong support of a UN Convention. I seriously hope that the Administration is reconsidering its position, and I call on the House Leadership to schedule my legislation as soon as possible, so that the Full House and the Senate can go on record in calling for an international convention before the next working group meeting in May. We also need to bring the complete resources of the U.S. Government to help in addressing the problems of people with disabilities abroad. That is why Frank Wolf and I introduced H.R. 1462, the International Disabilities and Victims of Civil Strife and Warfare Assistance Act, and we hope to see legislative action on that initiative soon.

We should be the engine of this effort, not the breaks.

Apart from our moral obligations as the richest and most powerful nation on this planet, the United States also stands to benefit directly from such efforts. First, only equal and full participation of all groups of society in all aspects of life can guarantee a stable country, and a strong democracy. I do not need to discuss this in great detail, as the spread of democracy around the globe has long been the foremost foreign policy goal of the United States. A leadership role in the field of international disability rights will significantly impact the positive perception of the United States globally. Second, in an increasingly global economy, American companies have to be global actors to be competitive. Maybe the critics of a strong US leadership role on this issue can explain to us how American citizens with disabilities will participate in those global opportunities, and the career chances they present, if persons with disabilities would not even be able to get to a branch office of their company in El Salvador, Rwanda, Vietnam or—let's say, Uzbekistan?

As you are aware, the US government recently made fundamental changes in the way we will consider foreign aid. The Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 (Pub. L. 108-199) established the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and clearly proscribes in Sec. 607(b)(1)(B) as one criteria for a country's eligibility for funds through the Millennium Challenge Account the "respect [for] human and civil rights, including the rights of people with disabilities." According to our legislation, "Such determination shall be based, to the maximum extent possible, upon objective and quantifiable indicators of a country's demonstrated commitment to the criteria in subsection (b), and shall, where appropriate, take into account and assess the role of women and girls."

The legislative intent is clear, the implementation is not. According to the MCC's Report on the Criteria and Methodology for Determining the Eligibility of Candidate Countries for Millennium Challenge Account Assistance in FY 2004, the disability rights criteria will largely be determined by the findings of the State Department's Human Rights Report. Unfortunately, the Country Reports vary widely in comprehensiveness and quality on this issue, precisely because

of the absence of recognized international standards, which we have for other human rights issues. Clearly, only global and enforceable disability rights standards which have become part of accepted international law by UN Member Countries through a UN Convention can provide us with appropriate reporting criteria, so that an objective determination can be made.

A GOOD WEEK FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, this week, two important pieces of legislation that will help Federal employees advanced in the House of Representatives. House Resolution 581, which expresses Congress's support for parity between military and civilian Federal employee pay raises, passed the House 2 days ago with strong bipartisan support. Yesterday, H.R. 3751, which requires the Administration to present options for expanding the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan (FEHBP) to include greater access to dental, vision and hearing benefits, received a unanimous vote in the Government Reform Committee.

Congressional efforts to correct pay disparities have been frustrated by the budgetary priorities of the Bush Administration, which has for years shown that pay parity is not a priority. Indeed, the administration's 2005 budget includes a 3.5 percent pay increase for military personnel, but only a 1.5 percent increase for civilian employees. The strong bipartisan support for pay parity in the House, even in the face of presidential opposition, illustrates the commitment many members of Congress feel for ensuring that we acknowledge the service and sacrifice made by both military and civilian personnel.

This week's Government Reform Committee vote in support of H.R. 3751 is also an important step forward for federal employees. Dental and vision problems can often be as disruptive to the lives of federal employees and their families as other health concerns. Yet vision and dental needs are not covered by many federal benefit plans. Serious, developing dental and vision problems are not often obvious to the casual observer and can sometimes only be detected by a physician. Despite its potential impact on general health, dental and vision insurance, in most cases, must currently be assumed by the federal employee alone at great personal expense. H.R. 3751 requires the Office of Personnel Management to explore ways to make affordable vision, hearing and dental care available to all federal employees.

Federal employee jobs, services and benefits have been the subject of much congressional activity lately. At every turn, the Bush Administration has fought efforts to protect the rights of federal employees and opposed the principle of pay parity in annual compensation. Fortunately, thanks to the success of these two bills, there is good news for federal employees this week.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MASTER TEACHER ACT OF 2004

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Master Teacher Act of 2004.

Qualified, experienced, dedicated teachers are our most valuable resources for educating the nation's children. Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA), states are required to recruit highly qualified teachers, yet rural schools and schools in low-income areas often have difficulty attracting and retaining faculty. The Master Teacher Act of 2004 will help improve these schools' ability to attract the best teachers.

The real tragedy in our education system is that so many schools are failing to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) performance standards. As currently designated by NCLBA, one hundred percent of our nation's public school students must meet AYP standards in reading, math, and science by the 2013-14 school year. This seems an insurmountable task for many underfunded school districts. In my home state of Maryland, more than one-third of public schools are now considered failing. This is not acceptable.

To improve educational achievement for all our students, we must ensure that underperforming public schools can attract and keep qualified teachers who will serve as a catalyst for change. The Master Teacher Act of 2004 will encourage teachers to work in those schools by offering tax incentives that will reward them financially for taking on such a challenge.

"Master teachers" are defined as faculty who hold a master's degree, have at least five years teaching experience in a public elementary or secondary school, meet the "highly qualified" standard as defined by the NCLBA, and have obtained advanced certification in their state licensing system. My legislation would reward "master teachers" who agree to teach in an underperforming school by exempting 25 percent of their gross income from federal taxes. They would be eligible for this exemption for up to four years. For the purposes of this legislation, underperforming schools are those that fail to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards as defined by NCLBA.

Mr. Speaker, good teachers are essential to a successful education system. They are the profession responsible for educating all other professionals, and therefore they are essential to our success as a nation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation and giving all our children access to the best teachers possible.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 29, 2004, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote 94, on passage of H.R. 3917, and rollcall vote 95, on passage of H.R. 2584. Had

I been present I would have voted "yes" on rollcall votes 94 and 95.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE NA- TIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, at the request of the Honorable Norman Mineta, Secretary of Transportation and distinguished former member of this House, I am pleased to introduce the Administration's requested legislation reauthorizing the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration. I include with this statement a copy of the letter transmitting this legislation to Speaker HASTERT by the Secretary.

I particularly want to commend the Administrator, Dr. Jeff Runge, for his fine leadership of the Agency.

I have concerns with some aspects of this proposal, but I believe it deserves a fair hearing.

I believe that provisions in the legislation facilitating the President's hydrogen initiative, provisions promoting international harmonization of safety standards, and provisions to encourage the development of crash avoidance technologies are particularly meritorious.

THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2004.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I am pleased to transmit to you for introduction and referral to the appropriate committee a proposed bill: To authorize appropriations for the motor vehicle safety and information and cost savings programs of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for fiscal years 2005-2007, and for other purposes.

The bill includes two titles. Title I, "Motor Vehicle Safety," contains an authorization of appropriations for the motor vehicle safety law (chapter 301 of title 49, United States Code) administered by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and seven additional sections that would amend that law. Title II, "Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings," contains an authorization of appropriations for the motor vehicle information and cost savings law (part C of subchapter VI of title 49, United States Code) administered by NHTSA and five additional sections that would amend that law.

Highway and motor vehicle safety programs and enforcement have succeeded in reducing the highway fatality rate despite significant increases in the number of vehicles and the number of vehicle miles traveled. Our most recent data show a rate of 1.5 fatalities per 100 million miles traveled, nearly half the rate of 20 years ago. The bill's proposed authorizations would provide the resources needed to continue this record of success for fiscal years 2005-2007.

Title I ("Motor Vehicle Safety") would authorize appropriations for NHTSA's motor vehicle safety programs of \$125,221,000 in fiscal year 2005, and such sums as may be necessary in fiscal years 2006 and 2007.

Title II ("Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings") would authorize appropriations for NHTSA's motor vehicle information and cost savings programs of \$14,080,000 in fiscal year 2005, and such sums as may be necessary in fiscal years 2006 and 2007.

The bill contains a number of amendments to the motor vehicle safety and information and cost savings laws, including provisions to (i) authorize the Secretary to participate and cooperate in international activities that enhance motor vehicle and traffic safety, (ii) authorize \$5 million a year to support the President's Hydrogen Fuel Initiative and the FreedomCAR Program by a safety research initiative for alternate fuel vehicles that includes risk-assessment studies of hydrogen-fueled and other alternatively fueled vehicles, the development of test and evaluation procedures and performance criteria to assess the likelihood of potential failures that could indicate unsafe conditions, and the development of suitable countermeasures; and (iii) authorize \$10 million a year for research into vehicle-based driver-assistance technologies such as electronic stability control, telematics, radar braking and similar vehicle advances, and to develop safety standards and consumer education programs, to ensure that appropriate safety benefits are derived from these technologies. Additional details describing these and other amendments are provided in the enclosed analysis.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that it has no objection, from the standpoint of the Administration's program, to the submission of this proposed legislation to Congress, and that its enactment would be in accord with the program of the President.

Sincerely yours,

NORMAN Y. MINETA.

HONORING KENNY TABB FOR HEROIC RESCUE

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay long overdue public tribute to a remarkable individual from my home state of Kentucky. Kenny Tabb, Hardin County Court Clerk and longtime community leader in Elizabethtown, KY, was nominated 46 years ago for a Young American Bravery National Medal following his rescue of an 11-year-old boy drowning in a swimming pool. Mr. Tabb never received word concerning the status of the 1958 award or appropriate recognition for his heroism.

On a summer day in 1958, Tabb, then 13, encountered a young mother screaming for help beside a hotel swimming pool. The woman's 11-year-old son, who could not swim, was struggling in the eight foot deep water, twice sinking below water. A young Kenny Tabb instinctively jumped into the pool, fully clothed, saving the boy from a near drowning.

On August 27, 1958, Representative Frank Chelf recommended to Attorney General William Rogers that a Young American Medal for Bravery be awarded to Kenny Tabb. The nomination was sent to a committee composed of F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover, the Attorney General and the Solicitor General. President Dwight Eisenhower later awarded two youth medals to earlier nominees and no Federal recognition was made to honor Tabb for his valor.

Kenny Tabb demonstrated unusual courage and a selfless instinct to help others on that summer day in the prime of his youth. His action in saving a young life was an early indication of his character, qualities that have made

him a brilliant public servant in the 46 years that have followed. Prior to his present post as clerk, Mr. Tabb served as Magistrate on the Hardin County Fiscal Court, as Assistant Principal at East Hardin High School and Principal at Sonora Elementary.

Today, I would like to correct a four-decade old administrative oversight and finally recognize Mr. Tabb, before the entire U.S. House of Representatives, for his childhood heroism and for his dutiful service to the Elizabethtown, KY, community in the years since. His efforts, then and now, make him an outstanding American, worthy of our collective respect and honor.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ON CONGRESSIONAL SUCCESSION

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I have just introduced a constitutional amendment on congressional succession. Much has been said over the last couple years about the need to make sure we have a functioning Congress that is perceived as legitimate in the case of a national disaster that kills or incapacitates a large proportion of Members of Congress. So far, none of the proposals that have been introduced have been able to appeal to a broad, bipartisan cross-section of Congress. I believe the constitutional amendment I have introduced today addresses the major criticisms that have been leveled against the "continuity of Congress" constitutional amendments that have been introduced so far.

Under my proposal, each general election candidate for the House or Senate would be authorized to publicly appoint, in ranked order, 3 to 5 potential temporary successors. The legitimacy of a successor designated in this way temporarily succeeding a deceased or incapacitated Representative or Senator is similar to that of a Vice President succeeding a deceased or incapacitated President—not separately elected, but chosen by the principal and known well in advance of the election.

The problem faced by other proposals of how to determine when sufficient members have died or been incapacitated to trigger emergency procedures is avoided in my proposal because no such determination is necessary. If a congressional continuity solution is good enough to use when 110 Representatives are killed or disabled, it should be good enough to use when 50 or 20 or even one Representative dies or becomes unable to discharge his or her duties. Continuity of Congress is certainly important, but so is continuity of representation. Death or incapacity of Representatives and Senators (as in the case of the late Senator Paul Wellstone) should not change the control of either House of Congress or the outcome of votes. Also, the legitimacy of a congressional succession plan is more likely to be accepted in a national emergency if it has previously worked in smaller tragedies.

To further legitimize temporary successors, my proposal would repeal the current power state governors have to appointment temporary Senators. Since the adoption of the 17th Amendment, the American people have

expected that the members of both Houses of Congress should be democratically elected. When a more democratic solution is available, we don't need to perpetuate the practice of a governor of another party being able to change the composition and control of the Senate just because a Senator tragically dies or is incapacitated.

My proposal would allow governors to appoint temporary Senators and Representatives only if the elected Senator or Representative has not submitted a list of successors or if none of the listed successors is able to serve. This backup appointment authority provides an incentive for Senators and Representatives (and potential Senators and Representatives) to make sure their "political will" is in order, since otherwise their governor could appoint someone they may not like. The backup authority of course also provides a further assurance of congressional continuity.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that my congressional succession constitutional amendment would solve the continuity of Congress problem in a way that would appeal to both sides of the aisle. I ask my colleagues for their support.

WELCOMING THE ACCESSION OF BULGARIA, ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, ROMANIA, SLO- VAKIA, AND SOLVENIA TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OR- GANIZATION

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution. I do so because further expansion of NATO, an outdated alliance, is not in our national interest and may well constitute a threat to our national security in the future.

More than 50 years ago the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed to defend Western Europe and the United States against attack from the communist nations of Eastern Europe. It was an alliance of sovereign nations bound together in common purpose—for mutual defense. The deterrence value of NATO helped kept the peace throughout the Cold War. In short, NATO achieved its stated mission. With the fall of the Soviet system and the accompanying disappearance of the threat of attack, in 1989–1991, NATO's reason to exist ceased. Unfortunately, as with most bureaucracies, the end of NATO's mission did not mean the end of NATO. Instead, heads of NATO member states gathered in 1999 desperately attempting to devise new missions for the outdated and adrift alliance. This is where NATO moved from being a defensive alliance respecting the sovereignty of its members to an offensive and interventionist organization, concerned now with "economic, social and political difficulties . . . ethnic and religious rivalries, territorial disputes, inadequate or failed efforts at reform, the abuse of human rights, and the dissolution of states," in the words of the Washington 1999 Summit.

And we saw the fruits of this new NATO mission in the former Yugoslavia, where the US, through NATO, attacked a sovereign state

that threatened neither the United States nor its own neighbors. In Yugoslavia, NATO abandoned the claim it once had to the moral high ground. The result of the illegal and immoral NATO intervention in the Balkans speaks for itself: NATO troops will occupy the Balkans for the foreseeable future. No peace has been attained, merely the cessation of hostilities and a permanent dependency on US foreign aid.

The further expansion of NATO is in reality a cover for increased US interventionism in Europe and beyond. It will be a conduit for more unconstitutional US foreign aid and US interference in the internal politics of member nations, especially the new members from the former East.

It will also mean more corporate welfare at home. As we know, NATO membership demands a minimum level of military spending of its member states. For NATO's new members, the burden of significantly increased military spending when there are no longer external threats is hard to meet. Unfortunately, this is where the US government steps in, offering aid and subsidized loans to these members so they can purchase more unneeded and unnecessary military equipment. In short, it is nothing more than corporate welfare for the US military industrial complex.

The expansion of NATO to these seven countries, we have heard, will open them up to the further expansion of US military bases, right up to the border of the former Soviet Union. Does no one worry that this continued provocation of Russia might have negative effects in the future? Is it necessary?

Further, this legislation encourages the accession of Albania, Macedonia, and Croatia—nations that not long ago were mired in civil and regional wars. The promise of US military assistance if any of these states are attacked is obviously a foolhardy one. What will the mutual defense obligations we are entering into mean if two Balkan NATO members begin hostilities against each other (again)?

In conclusion, we should not be wasting US tax money and taking on more military obligations expanding NATO. The alliance is a relic of the Cold War, a hold-over from another time, an anachronism. It should be disbanded, the sooner the better.

YOU CAN BE A PART OF BUILDING SAFETY WEEK

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Building Safety Week, observed April 4–10. Building safety affects many aspects of American life. Because of building safety code enforcement, we enjoy the comfort of structures that are safe and sound. Building safety and fire prevention officials work with citizens to address building safety and fire prevention concerns everyday.

The dedicated members of the International Code Council, including building safety and fire prevention officials, architects, engineers, and others in the construction industry, develop and enforce the codes that safeguard Americans in the buildings where we live, work, play and learn. The International Codes, the most widely adopted building safety and

fire prevention codes in the nation, are used by most U.S. cities, counties and states.

Building safety codes provide safeguards to protect the public from natural disasters that can occur all across the country, such as snowstorms, hurricanes, tornadoes, wildland fires, and earthquakes. Building safety codes also work to minimize other potential building catastrophes.

Building Safety Week, sponsored by the International Code Council Foundation, is an opportunity to educate the public. It is a perfect time to increase public awareness of the role building safety and fire prevention officials, local and state building departments, and federal agencies play in the first line of defense to protect the public.

This year's theme, "You Can Be a Part of Building Safety Week," encourages all Americans to raise our awareness of building safety, and to take appropriate steps to ensure that the places where we live, work, play and learn are safe. Countless lives have been saved because of the building safety codes adopted and enforced by local and state agencies.

This year, as we observe Building Safety Week, I ask all Americans to consider projects to improve building safety at home and in the community, and to recognize the local building safety and fire prevention officials and the important role that they play in public safety.

I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize building safety and fire prevention officials today and urge all people to participate in Building Safety Week activities and to commence efforts to improve building safety.

RECOGNIZING THE LATIN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Latin Business Association (LBA) for its 28 years of performing exceptional work in promoting business growth, advocacy and education for the Latino community.

Established in 1976 as a private nonprofit organization, the LBA is the nation's largest Latino business entity with an active membership of 1,200 and overall outreach to Latino business owners. LBA's membership and outreach efforts enable it to fulfill its mission of being the fastest and most effective leader of Latino business opportunities in the market place. In addition, the LBA helps Latino-owned businesses grow by providing business-training workshops and developing effective advocacy programs.

More than a leader in the business world, the LBA transcends political, cultural, and language barriers that impact our nation's economic balance. As a result of the LBA's hard work, Latino businesses, executives, and entrepreneurs are not only nationally recognized, but have the opportunity to influence the nation's economic public policy.

As the Latino population continues to grow, the development of new corporations and entrepreneurial businesses will jumpstart our economy. I believe the LBA will be at the forefront among strong and influential business organizations offering support and direction to the Latino business community.

Tonight's 28th Annual Sol Business Awards Gala is a testament to the emerging significance and influence of the Latino business community. I am proud to recognize the LBA, its Board of Directors, and its members for 28 years of successfully generating business opportunities, providing advocacy, and educating the Latino community for business growth. The LBA has distinguished itself as an exceptional leader in Latino business development and I wish it much longevity and prosperity.

COMMENDING MARK PEPOWSKI

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor that I stand before you today to recognize the achievements of a fine college professor, Mark Peplowski, in Henderson, NV. He has dedicated himself to the service of Henderson students through his loyalty to the Community College of Southern Nevada. Beginning with his appointment as an adjunct professor in 1976 he has been determined to make Henderson, NV a better place by dedicating his career to Community College of Southern Nevada.

During his career as an adjunct professor and a professor, he has created programs to bring his students into the political world by providing ways for them to travel to our Nation's Capitol to work and meet with the many leaders of our Nation. He has been there as a mentor and counselor to his students in helping them accomplish their career goals in politics.

Mark Peplowski has also had a long-term goal of creating a Grass Roots Institute of Politics at the Henderson campus to give students from all backgrounds a chance to participate in and understand the political process with the opportunity to get involved in government.

I commend Mark Peplowski for his dedication to his students and his loyalty to his country. He has demonstrated that he is an effective teacher and has continuously taught his students the meaning of good government through his example and dedication to learning.

SPIRITUAL LEADER, BLESSED PRESENCE

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, one of Michigan's finest citizens recently passed away. I have been searching for the right words to express my high esteem for Bishop Kenneth E. Untener. Having just read the editorial in the Saginaw News of Saginaw, Michigan, I feel that they have expressed well the love in which the Bishop was held by those whose lives he had touched.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the Saginaw News editorial be reprinted in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

[From the Saginaw News, Mar. 31, 2004]

SPIRITUAL LEADER, BLESSED PRESENCE

For the better part of a quarter century, Bishop Kenneth E. Untener served the Saginaw Diocese with humility, humor and unflinching devotion. His faith and commitment to God are unquestioned. Yet Untener's fidelity to the welfare of the region's people—people of all faiths, creeds and colors—was an equally profound reflection of his humanity and ability to lead.

His death this weekend of leukemia leaves a deep void in the Saginaw Valley, and not just among Catholics. The bishop's work to improve the community, to unite its interconnected and diverse components, was tireless. He was an inspiring presence within the region's religious and civic communities.

As former Saginaw Mayor Henry Marsh, his friend and compatriot in community affairs put it, Saginaw cannot replace him. His outreach brought hundreds of the region's leaders together via his monthly "bishop's breakfast" meetings. He was active in Saginaw County Vision 2020, Habitat for Humanity and myriad youth initiatives. He abolished perceived barriers among individuals and between groups.

There is no doubt Bishop Untener was taken, in the transitory, earthly way, too soon. It was only a few weeks ago that he announced his battle with cancer. He was 66.

The church, of course, will name a successor to lead the 140,000-member, 11-county Saginaw Diocese. The community will welcome the next bishop, and Untener's successor will embark on a path to leave his own mark.

Yet Untener's legacy will survive through his civic example and in his acclaimed religious writings. His "Little Books" are inspirational guides used by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. The level of praise from within the religious community, from clergy of all faiths, is a testament to Untener's bridge-building skills. His outreach sometimes rankled members of his own faith, as in his support for female priests, as contradictory to traditional church doctrine.

As a man living among us, however, Bishop Untener's humble march toward unity serves as an example we all would wisely strive to follow.

The community was blessed by Bishop Untener's presence for nearly a quarter century. The people he touched are forever changed; the community he served was changed for the better, too.

IN HONOR OF ALVIN "SAM" SHRADER

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Alvin "Sam" Shrader's dedication to public service as the Breakfast Rotary Club of Camarillo recognizes him for 60 years of perfect Rotary Club attendance.

As my colleagues are aware, the object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service in all aspects of one's life—business, personal and community. Alvin Shrader epitomizes that ideal.

Alvin Shrader and his wife, Avis (or Suzy as she's better known), will celebrate 70 years of marriage this June. They have three wonderful children, including my lovely wife, Janice. Alvin Shrader is as dedicated to his wife, children, eight grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren

and great-great-grandchild (soon to be two) as he has been to the Rotary over many decades.

In true Rotary fashion, Alvin Shrader also kept the Rotary ideal alive in his business dealings. He became a chiropractor in the 1930s and helped change its image and acceptability as an active member and past treasurer of the California Chiropractic Association. He is also a lifelong gardener, tending to his vegetables with the same care that he tends to all life.

Rotary has been the social center of Alvin and Avis' life. Prior to joining Rotary in 1945, Alvin was a member of the 20-30 Club's Los Angeles Chapter, where he also marked perfect attendance. He is a former Rotary Club of Los Angeles Southwest president and Avis is a former Rotary Ann.

When on the road, Alvin Shrader makes it a point to make up meetings by visiting other Rotary Clubs. He has attended meetings at clubs in Florida; Salt Lake City; Crystal City, VA; Carson City; St. Louis; Puerto Rico and the Kingdom of Tonga. When he was recently hospitalized with a broken hip, his biggest concern was making up Rotary meetings.

Mr. Speaker, I am blessed to have Alvin and Avis as my in-laws. As patriarch and matriarch of the Shrader family, they set the standard for generations to follow. It is a high standard of love and dedication that any family would be proud to follow. I know my colleagues will join me in recognizing Alvin "Sam" Shrader for a lifetime of service to family, his profession and his community by upholding and living the Rotary ideal.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-DULUTH MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the University of Minnesota-Duluth men's hockey team on reaching the 2004 NCAA Men's Frozen Four Hockey Tournament. This moment has been 19 years in the making, since the last UMD men's hockey team reached the Frozen Four in 1985. This is the second time the UMD men's hockey team has reached the Frozen Four, and the third NCAA trip for the men's hockey team.

I want to acknowledge, in particular, the accomplishments of Head Coach and Hibbing, Minnesota native Scott Sandelin. Scott has been awarded the 2004 Western Collegiate College Association's Coach of the Year award. He is one of the most promising young coaches in college hockey and has only 4 years behind the bench as head coach. He is not only a great coach, but also a superb instructor who has taught his players a great understanding of the game. The team has demonstrated that understanding of the game with their impressive 28-12-4 record. It is clear that the lessons learned on the ice will serve these student-athletes well after graduation, which is the hallmark of college athletics.

I also want to congratulate University of Minnesota Duluth Senior, Junior Lessard, who became the seventh Bulldog to be named a Hobey Baker finalist. Mr. Lessard was se-

lected as 2004 Western Collegiate Hockey Association Player of the Year and helped the Bulldogs advance to the Frozen Four for the first time in 19 years. He leads the nation in scoring with 61 points and 20 assists in league play.

I want to commend Coach Sandelin, Junior Lessard and the entire UMD hockey team for their outstanding season and to wish them success in the NCAA Frozen Four tournament.

IN HONOR OF ANTONIA HERNANDEZ

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, it is with utmost pleasure and privilege that I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to a great American and good friend, Antonia Hernandez, Former President and General Counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). To me, Antonia is many things: a national leader on civil rights and public policy, a pioneer who has opened doors for countless underrepresented Americans in this country, and a wonderful friend and mentor who after 23 years with MALDEF, has embarked on another ambitious journey by leading one of this country's premiere charitable institutions, the California Community Foundation.

Born on May 30, 1948, Antonia was raised in Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico. At the age of eight, her parents, Manuel and Nicolasa Hernandez, emigrated, family and all, to the United States and settled in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of East Los Angeles. Growing up in the housing projects of East Los Angeles, Antonia learned her strong work ethic and core values from her parents. As the eldest of seven children (Maria, Guadalupe, Lisa, Mary Ann, Peter, and Manuel), Antonia demonstrated an incredible entrepreneurial spirit at an early age, going door-to-door in her housing project selling tamales to help support the family.

Antonia is a proud alumna of Garfield High School and East Los Angeles College. The first in her family to attend college, Antonia set her sights higher and went on to receive a Bachelor of Arts in history in 1970 and a Juris Doctorate in 1974 from the University of California, Los Angeles.

On October 8, 1977, Antonia married Michael Stern, and together they have become an indivisible team, blessed with a true partnership, friendship and love. Family has always been the top priority for these proud parents of three: Benjamin, Marisa, and Michael.

Antonia's illustrious career has taken her from the Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice to the Legal Aid Foundation, the United States Senate Judiciary Committee and of course MALDEF, where she quickly became an indispensable asset and emblematic of MALDEF's tenacity to prevail. Her collaborative style and incredible network of relationships have propelled MALDEF to the top of our nation's leading civil rights and public policy organizations. She served a remarkable and unprecedented 18 years as President and General Counsel of this preeminent organiza-

tion. Under her guidance, MALDEF has gained long-term financial stability going from an organization that began in 1968 with a \$2.2 million grant from the Ford Foundation to one that operates a \$6.5 million annual budget and has offices in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, Sacramento and San Antonio.

What mark has this human being left on America? She heroically led the fight defeating the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 in the California courts in the 1990's. She courageously worked on the 1995 Edgewood case which held that the Texas legislature had the authority to require wealthier districts to share that wealth with less fortunate districts. Today, while still a work in progress, we are moving towards an educational system that provides a fair opportunity to all Texan children. And Latino families are forever indebted to Antonia for her instrumental role in pursuing accurate census counts in 1990 and 2000. Under her leadership, MALDEF took the lead in conducting nationwide census outreach campaigns and kept a vigilant watch over the complicated redistricting process so that Latinos would, for the first time, have a strong political voice throughout the country.

Antonia's years of demonstrated leadership led the California Community Foundation to name her as its new Chief Executive Officer and President. With this new position comes the opportunity to forge new paths and serve Californians in new ways.

Antonia's legal career has always embodied her passion for helping the Latino and other disenfranchised communities to "make sure that everyone has a place at the table." One of her former colleagues best characterized Antonia as someone who can interact respectfully with the most modest, humble immigrants and then translate their needs into action. As Antonia closes one chapter of her distinguished career and begins another, I would like to say "thank you" on behalf of the countless people whose lives she has changed by opening doors, leading by example and always holding firm to her convictions. Her innumerable contributions will be felt and appreciated for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, as family, friends, and colleagues gather to pay tribute to Antonia, it is with great admiration and pride that I ask my colleagues to join me today in saluting this truly remarkable example of the American dream. Fortunately for all of us Antonia has much vigor and fight reserved for her new calling at the helm of the California Community Foundation. Antonia, you have earned the luck that will be with you.

TRIBUTE TO ANN SUNSTEIN KHEEL

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ann Sunstein Kheel who died in New York City on December 28 at the age of 88. Ms. Kheel was a woman as close to a saint as I have ever known. She dedicated her whole life to the fight for social and racial justice. Born in Pittsburgh in 1915, she went to Cornell University where she earned a degree

in General Studies in 1936. She lived in New York City ever since.

Ms. Kheel's goal was to make the American society "inclusive rather than exclusive." It was her motto "never to entertain except interracially" and not to support organizations which were not integrated. She remained truthful to these ideas throughout her life. She served on the board of the New York Urban League for more than thirty years and initiated its Frederick Douglass Awards Dinner in 1966. For 25 years she was the chairwoman of this event, which honors leaders in the private and public sectors who try to eliminate race barriers and promote opportunities for the disadvantaged.

In the 1960s Ms. Kheel sponsored the purchase of books for students attending the Frederick Douglass Junior High School in Harlem who had completed research on individuals who had had a significant impact on African-American or Puerto-American history. In 1963 and 1964 she was a delegate to the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunities and, from 1971 to 1986, she served as a trustee of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The NAACP awarded her with the Unity Award in 1971.

Ms. Kheel was also deeply involved in campaigns for environmental justice. She served as chairwoman of the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commission from 1977 to 1986 and as trustee of the Rainforest Alliance. The promotion of better public education in New York City was another issue close to her heart.

Ms. Kheel ensured that her great contributions to the social life of New York City would not end with her death. In her last will, she asked her husband of 66 years, labor lawyer Theodore Kheel, to provide funding for charities. The Kheel family decided to create the Ann S. Kheel Charitable Trust and endowed it with \$1 million. I am very honored that the Kheel family has asked me to chair this Trust which will provide funding for educational, civil rights and other organizations serving disadvantaged New York neighborhoods.

Ms. Kheel was an admirable woman and serves as a shining example in our society. Her death is a big loss for New York City, but she will always be remembered as a woman dedicated to achieving more social and racial equality in our society.

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTOPHER
DARDEN AND WILLIAM SCHAUB

HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER
OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Christopher Darden and William Schaub for receiving the 2003 Isaac M. Cline Award from the National Weather Service.

The Isaac M. Cline Award is presented each year to individuals and teams that have made significant contributions in support of National Weather Service strategic and operational plans. Mr. Darden and Mr. Schaub were awarded the Cline award for their work demonstrating exceptional metrological skill and professionalism on May 6, 2003.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Darden and Mr. Schaub are lead forecasters at the NWS Weather

Forecast Office in Huntsville, Alabama. On May 6th, North Alabama was experiencing extensive flash flooding and numerous reports of tornadoes throughout the region. Mr. Darden and Mr. Schaub issued a series of Tornado Warnings that had an average warning lead time of twenty-three minutes. In addition, they issued several Flash Flood Warnings with a lead time of up to forty-five minutes. Due to the timeliness and accuracy of these severe weather warnings, Mr. Darden and Mr. Schaub likely saved numerous lives.

Mr. Darden and Mr. Schaub are being recognized for efforts performed within mere months of the opening of the new Huntsville Weather Forecast Office. This is a testament to their knowledge and expertise that is critical to address the unique weather patterns and needs of North Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, the Isaac M. Cline Award is the highest honor the National Weather Service can bestow upon its employees. I rise today, to congratulate Christopher Darden and William Schaub on this honor.

HONORING MERLE KILGORE

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a great Tennessean and a legend in country music. Merle Kilgore is a businessman who has bridged his early music experience with today's growing country music industry.

Merle began his career in Shreveport, Louisiana at the age of 14, carrying Hank Williams, Sr.'s guitar. Since then, Merle has risen as a leader in the country music industry. He co-wrote the "Ring of Fire" with June Carter-Cash, as recorded by Johnny Cash. That great hit sold more than sixteen million records. Merle didn't stop there; he continued to write hit after hit developing his catalog to over 300 songs. All together his song collection has sold close to fifty million records. Merle's first Top Ten record was self penned "Dear Mama," and he has accumulated several others since.

Merle moved to Nashville in 1962 and began his management career. Merle has been affiliated with Hank Williams, Jr. for more than thirty years. On April 7, 1986, Merle was named the Executive Vice President and head of management of Hank Williams, Jr. Enterprises.

In addition to managing Hank's career, Merle has served as Vice President of the Country Music Association and has served on the CMA Board of Directors since 1989. He has been President of both the Nashville Songwriter's Foundation, as well as the Nashville Songwriter's Association International. In 1987 he was named an honorary State Senator for Tennessee, and in 1998, Merle received the Legendary Songwriter's Award from the North American Country Music Association.

Merle is an accomplished singer, songwriter, and actor. He is a shining star in the nation's entertainment industry. However, Merle is definitely not just "resting on his laurels." For Singer-Songwriter-Manager Merle Kilgore, the best may be yet to come. Today I rise to rec-

ognize Merle and thank him for his dedication and his willingness to share his incredible talents with Tennesseans and country music fans worldwide.

HONORING CESAR CHAVEZ ON THE
ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF
HIS DEATH

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce a celebration to honor Cesar Chavez on April 24, 2004, in Kansas City, Missouri. This celebration commemorates his legacy and the eleventh anniversary of his death, April 23, 1993.

Cesar has become a champion of working people everywhere. Born into Depression-era poverty in Arizona in 1927, he served in the United States Navy in the Second World War, and rose to become one of our greatest advocates of nonviolent change.

The farm workers who labored in the fields and yearned for respect and self-sufficiency pinned their hopes on this remarkable man, who, with faith and discipline, with soft-spoken humility and amazing inner strength, led a very courageous life. And in so doing, he brought dignity to the lives of so many others and provided inspiration for the rest of our Nation's history.

After achieving only an eighth-grade education, Cesar left school to work in the fields full-time to support his family. It was there that he noticed the labor contractors and the land owners exploited the workers. He tried reasoning with the farm owners about higher pay and better working conditions. But most of his fellow workers would not support him for fear of losing their jobs. Cesar's dream was to create an organization to protect and serve farm workers, whose struggles he shared. At the age of 35, he left his own well paid job to devote all his time to organizing the farm workers into a union. Cesar traveled from camp to camp recruiting workers, and the National Farm Workers Union was born.

With a strong leader to represent them, the workers began to demand their rights for fair pay and better working conditions. Without these rights, no one would work in the fields. In 1965, the grape growers didn't listen to the union's demands, and the farmhands wanted a strike. The workers left the fields, and the unharvested grapes began to rot on the vines. Union members, Cesar included, were jailed repeatedly. But public officials, religious leaders, and ordinary citizens from all across the United States flocked to California to march in support of the farm workers. In 1970, some grape growers signed agreements with the union. The union lifted the grape boycott, and its members began to pick grapes again. That same year, Cesar thought that even people who could not travel to California could show their support for his cause. Thus he appealed for a nationwide boycott of lettuce. People from all parts of the United States who sympathized with the cause of the farm workers refused to buy lettuce. Some even picketed in front of supermarkets.

By 1973, when Cesar inspired the people of Kansas City with his message of equality, justice and social change in an address at Penn

Valley Community College, the union had changed its name to the United Farm Workers of America. Relations with the grape growers had once again deteriorated, so a grape boycott was added to the boycott of lettuce. On several occasions, Cesar fasted to protest the violence that arose. Finally, by 1978, some of the workers' conditions were met, and the United Farm Workers lifted the boycotts on lettuce and grapes. This is just one example of how dedicated Cesar was to the union and the people who counted on him.

Up until the day he died, he was concerned as ever about dignity, justice, and fairness. He said, "Fighting for social justice, it seems to me, is one of the profoundest ways in which man can say yes to man's dignity, and that really means sacrifice. There is no way on this earth in which you can say yes to man's dignity and know that you're going to be spared some sacrifice."

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring a small man with a big dream, Cesar Chavez. Cesar Chavez is a dedicated and true American hero: A civil rights, Latino and labor leader, a community servant and a crusader for nonviolent social change.

THE CIGARETTE FIRE SAFETY
ACT OF 2004

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, today my friend, Congressman PETER KING and I rise to introduce on a bipartisan basis the Cigarette Fire Safety Act of 2004. This legislation will set a

reasonable ignition standard for cigarettes and help to prevent an estimated 800 deaths, 2,200 injuries and nearly \$560 million dollars in damages caused by cigarette ignited fires every year. We are joined today by 38 of our colleagues to begin what we hope is the last leg of a very long journey.

It is common knowledge that smoking is considered one of the nation's leading causes of preventable death, but it's less widely known that cigarettes are also the leading cause of fatal fires. Every year thousands of innocent people are killed, maimed or permanently disfigured by carelessly discarded cigarettes. The real tragedy is that many of these fires could be prevented by making a few small adjustments to the design of the cigarette at a cost of only pennies.

Over twenty years ago, our former colleague and friend, Joe Moakley, became involved with this issue when a family of seven perished in a fire ignited by a cigarette in his Congressional District. Five children—all under the age of ten—were burned to death along with their parents on Memorial Day Weekend in 1979.

Through Joe's relentless work on this issue, Congress passed two technical bills into law that laid the foundation for this legislation. The first bill, the Federal Cigarette Safety Act of 1984, formed a Technical Study Group, which established that it was, contrary to the tobacco industry's assertions, technically and economically feasible to manufacture a cigarette that is less likely to ignite a fire without increasing the risk of health consequences. The second bill, the Federal Safe Cigarette Act of 1990, established the methodology for testing the ignition propensity of cigarettes.

Recently we have made great steps forward in reducing risk of cigarette ignited fires. Phillip

Morris has launched Merit cigarettes—their brand of less fire prone cigarettes. Merit cigarettes have proved that less fire prone cigarettes are both technically and commercially feasible.

Last year in a historic move, the state of New York passed the very first cigarette fire safety standard. By the end of this June, New York will require that all tobacco companies that sell cigarettes certify that no more than 25 percent of the cigarettes sold fail the ignition propensity test established by the American Society of Testing and Materials ("ASTM"). That means that cigarettes are far less likely to start a fire if they are left unattended. This law will make great strides towards preventing the all too frequent devastating cigarette ignited fires in New York.

Taking the lead from New York State and using their standard, two days ago Canada became the first nation to pass a cigarette fire safety standard.

However, New Yorkers and Canadians should not be the only ones who are protected from these little torches. Everyone in the United States deserves the same level of protection from fires caused by cigarettes. That is why today I am proposing a bill that requires that the CPSC adopt the New York cigarette fire safety standard as the national standard.

We can no longer tolerate losing one more innocent child or putting one more firefighter at risk in a fire that could have been prevented at the cost of pennies by making a couple simple changes to the construction of a cigarette. Together we can save thousands of lives and prevent the tremendous pain of thousands more burn victims. I urge you to support this bill.